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VOLUME LXVI



JUDGMENT AND COMMUNITY CONFLICT

*Paul's Use of Apocalyptic Judgment Language
in 1 Corinthians 3:5-4:5*

BY

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LEIDEN • NEW YORK • KØBENHAVN • KÖLN
1992

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ISSN 0167-9732
ISBN 90 04 09510 1

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

*For my father
and in memory of my mother*

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
AnBib	Analecta biblica
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
ATR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
BAGD	W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the NT</i>
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BEvT	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BFCT	Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BibS(F)	Biblische Studien (Freiburg, 1895-)
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur ZAW
BZNW	Beihefte zur ZNW
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly—Monograph Series
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
ConBNT	Coniectanea biblica, New Testament
<i>CTM</i>	<i>Concordia Theological Monthly</i>
<i>CurTM</i>	<i>Currents in Theology and Mission</i>
EvT	Evangelische Theologie
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GG	Werner Peek, Griechische Grabgedichte
GVI	Werner Peek, Griechische Vers-Inschriften
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IDB</i>	G. A. Buttrick (ed.), <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
<i>IDBSup</i>	Supplementary volume to <i>IDB</i>

Int	Interpretation
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOT Sup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament--Supplement Series
JTC	Journal for Theology and the Church
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
<i>LW</i>	<i>Lutheran World</i>
MeyerK	H. A. W. Meyer, Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
NCB	New Century Bible
<i>NKZ</i>	<i>Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum, Supplements
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTL	New Testament Library
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
<i>OTP</i>	James H. Charlesworth (ed.), <i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>PMR</i>	James H. Charlesworth, <i>The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research</i>
PTMS	Pittsburgh (Princeton) Theological Monograph Series
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i>
RechBib	Recherches bibliques
RelSRev	Religious Studies Review
<i>RGG</i>	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i>
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLASP	SBL Abstracts and Seminar Papers
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series
SBL SBS	SBL Sources for Biblical Study
SBLSCS	SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLTT	SBL Texts and Translations
SBM	Stuttgarter biblische Monographien
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SCHNT	Studia ad corpus hellenisticum novi testamenti
SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series

STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SPB	Studia postbiblica
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha
TBü	Theologische Bücherei
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
TLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie
TSK	<i>Theologische Studien und Kritiken</i>
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UNT	Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZKT	Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche
ZWT	<i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie</i>

Abbreviations for biblical and other ancient texts may be found in "Instructions for Contributors," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988), 579-96 and in Liddell-Scott-Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon with Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), xvi-xlv.

PREFACE

The ancient Egyptian after death faced a judgment before Osiris in the underworld. The Persian would have to pass through a river of fire to determine who was righteous and who was not. The soul of the Greek stood before Minos and Rhadamanthus, who would assign to each postmortem praise or blame. The Roman read in Virgil that Aeneas in the underworld had seen two ways--the one on the right to Elysium, the one on the left to punishment for the wicked in Tartarus.¹ Many Jews expected that "many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan 12:2).² Among Christians it was believed that Jesus would "come again to judge the living and the dead."³ In some of these views the judgment would take place for each person immediately after death; in other views all people would be judged together at the end of the world. Whatever the details, many people found the imaginative vision of divine judgment to be an appropriate ending to the uncertain strivings of human life.

There were many, to be sure, who denied or ignored these mythic hopes and fears of judgment and future life. They found other visions which gave them "the sense of an ending."⁴ Their lives were shaped by other imaginings, whether it be the lust for immediate gratification or the search for some higher knowledge which would free them from the ordinary pressures of living and fears of dying. For people of this latter kind of view there was no need for the vision of a coming judgment, since their lives had already become all they could be.

Locating the beliefs of people along this spectrum is a difficult task for the historian. Nowhere is this difficulty more apparent than in the case of the people addressed in Paul's letter known as First Corinthians. What sort of sense of the end did these Corinthian Christians have? What Corinthian vision of life provoked Paul's exasperated jibe, "Already you are filled! Already you have become rich! Without us you have

¹ Virgil *Aeneid* 6.540-44. On various ancient beliefs about judgment see especially S. G. F. Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead: The Idea of Life after Death in the Major Religions* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967). For Greco-Roman beliefs see Chapter Two below.

² Unless otherwise noted all Biblical quotations are from the RSV.

³ The phrase is from the "Apostles' Creed"; similar phrases are found in Acts 10:42; 2 Tim 4:1; 1 Pet 4:5; Barn 7:2; 2 Clem 1:1; Pol. Phil 2:1.

⁴ The phrase is borrowed from the title of the book by Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).

become kings!’’ (1 Cor 4:8)? What sort of sense of the end was in the minds of those in Corinth who ‘‘say that there is no resurrection of the dead’’ (1 Cor 15:12)? Did they shape their lives wholly without reference to a future resurrection and judgment? On the other hand, what sort of alternative vision did Paul offer when he spoke of the coming ‘‘day of our Lord Jesus Christ’’ (1 Cor 1:8), of future ‘‘reward’’ (3:8, 14) and ‘‘praise’’ (4:5), of the fact that ‘‘the appointed time has grown very short’’ (7:29), of the imperishable crown (9:25), of the condemnation of the world (11:32), of the fact that only ‘‘then I shall understand fully’’ (13:12), of the fact that ‘‘the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable’’ (15:52)? Is there in 1 Corinthians the clash of two fundamentally opposed visions of the end, or is the clash rather one between two alternative shapes of life generated by the same vision of the end?

In the study which follows I intend to demonstrate that a fresh exegetical study of 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 will provide the best angle of approach to the question of the Corinthian and Pauline visions of the judgment and the future, for the following reasons: (1) it is usually held that, as the first main section of 1 Corinthians, chapters 1-4 set forth the main lines of the letter’s concerns; (2) the dominant eschatological motif in 1 Corinthians is divine judgment, and it is future divine judgment which is central to the argument of 3:5-4:5; (3) any convincing interpretation of eschatology in 1 Corinthians must consider the meaning of 4:8, and this verse is best interpreted in its context within chapters 1-4 and in close connection with 3:5-4:5; (4) no previous study of the problem of eschatology in 1 Corinthians has taken account of chapters 3-4 in relation to the Corinthian position or Paul’s response to it.

The development of this study will be as follows. In the first chapter I will sharpen my questions by analyzing previous scholarship on Paul’s use of final judgment conceptions, on Paul’s eschatology as a whole, and on the problem of future eschatology in 1 Corinthians. Also in this chapter I will clarify my own working assumptions concerning the definition and methods of study of apocalyptic eschatology. The second and third chapters will attempt to bring greater precision and control to bear on my exegetical work by examining the function of traditions of divine judgment in both Greco-Roman and Jewish sources. The fourth chapter will be my exegesis of 1 Cor 3:5-4:5, with a view to the function of future eschatology in the argument of Paul. The fifth chapter will draw together some conclusions on Paul’s use of eschatological judgment language.

The goal of this study, then, is to shed light on the disputed question of the nature of the problems in the Corinthian congregation and on Paul’s response to the situation. I will approach this question by means

of an interpretation of the situational context and the intention of the future eschatological statements of the letter, particularly the language of final judgment in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5. The result, it is hoped, will be that our knowledge of the role of the vision of the end for early Christian life will be brought into clearer focus.

This study is a revised form of a dissertation which was accepted by Yale University in 1989. I owe a great deal to my adviser, Wayne Meeks. His teaching, writings, and personal guidance have been invaluable from the tentative beginnings of forming this topic through the final stages of writing. If this thesis makes any contribution to our discipline of New Testament studies, it will be in large measure because of his patient prodding to look at old topics in new ways.

My thanks also go to Abraham Malherbe and Richard Hays for their help and advice at various stages of the project. I also wish to express my debt to Edgar Krentz, of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, for his early encouragement of my interest in the New Testament and for his continued friendship and support over the years.

My wife Mary and children Sarah and Benjamin deserve mention for their patient support and encouragement. The joys and the frustrations of working on a lengthy manuscript are more easily kept in perspective when they are shared with those who live with you every day. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to the editorial board of the series *Supplements to Novum Testamentum* and to the editors at E.J. Brill for including this book in this distinguished series and for guiding it through the process of publication.

David W. Kuck
June 1991

CHAPTER ONE

APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF APOCALYPTIC JUDGMENT LANGUAGE IN PAUL AND IN 1 CORINTHIANS

1. Approaches to Judgment as a Separate Theme

There are a number of studies which treat the theme of divine judgment in Paul's letters. My concern here is to review these only as they relate to the role of future judgment in 1 Corinthians.¹

The majority of scholars have approached the theme of judgment in Paul out of concern with the theological issue of the apparent contradiction between judgment according to works and justification by faith. Some earlier German scholars solved the problem by speaking of justification as Paul's real position, while his references to judgment according to works are merely a relic carried over from his former Jewish ways of thinking.² Bultmann is sometimes accused of this view, although he says only that Paul speaks of judgment according to works "in at least seeming contradiction to his doctrine of justification by faith alone" or

¹ The most important separate treatments of judgment in Paul are: Ernst Teichmann, *Die paulinischen Vorstellungen von Auferstehung und Gericht und ihre Beziehung zur jüdischen Apokalyptik* (Freiburg & Leipzig: Mohr [Siebeck], 1896); Ernst Kühl, *Rechtfertigung auf Grund Glaubens und Gericht nach den Werken bei Paulus* (Königsberg: Koch, 1904); Gillis P. Wetter, *Der Vergeltungsgedanke bei Paulus: Eine Studie zur Religion des Apostels* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912); Herbert Braun, *Gerichtsgedanke und Rechtfertigungslehre bei Paulus* (UNT 19; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1930); Floyd V. Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense* (UNT 21; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1931); Georges Didier, *Désintéressement du Chrétien: La rétribution dans la morale de Saint Paul* (Théologie 32; Paris: Aubier, 1955); Richard Campbell Devor, "The Concept of Judgment in the Epistles of Paul" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Drew University, 1959); Lieselotte Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus* (ATANT 47; Zürich & Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1966); Calvin J. Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community: A Study of the Relationship between Eschatology and Ecclesiology in Paul* (Leiden: Brill, 1972); Karl Paul Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment in Paul," *ZNW* 67 (1976), 90-110; Ernst Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Göttinger Theologische Arbeiten 8; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977); Nigel M. Watson, "Justified by Faith, Judged by Works-an Antinomy?," *NTS* 29 (1983), 209-21. Also relevant are the numerous studies on justification in Paul. For a review of earlier studies on judgment see James P. Martin, *The Last Judgment in Protestant Theology from Orthodoxy to Ritschl* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963). Surveys of scholarship can be found in Braun, *Gerichtsgedanke*, 14-31; Mattern, *Verständnis*, 53-58; Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 1-13; Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 9-12.

² See Watson, "Justified by Faith," 211 and 220 n. 8.

"in words that sound open to misunderstanding."³ It is Herbert Braun who deals with the question most extensively in these terms. On the one hand, Braun affirms the important place of judgment in the theology of Paul, not just as a parenetic motivation but also as a presupposition for his teaching on justification and grace.⁴ Yet on the other hand Braun accuses Paul of inconsistency, of an atomizing "Rückfall in den Tenor jüdischer Paränese," which Braun thinks is understandable in a man who spent the first half of his life in Judaism.⁵

Others have simply asserted that justification and judgment stand in unresolved tension in Paul. Titius speaks of a formal, if not actual, contradiction between Paul's teaching on justification and on recompense.⁶ Kennedy speaks of a "profound paradox."⁷ Watson has recently revived the view of Joest that, although the paradox between justification and judgment is insoluble, we can understand the tension between them as a reflection of the occasional nature of Paul's letters.⁸

Stuhlmacher resorts to a dualistic solution by stating that the final judgment of the Christian is a judgment only of the flesh which still clings to the believer; the salvation of the believer's spirit is assured by the past act of the creator God, whose faithfulness outlasts the final judgment. Although Stuhlmacher does little exegesis of the texts, the pivotal passages for his view are 1 Cor 5:5 and 3:15.⁹

In his programmatic essay Donfried takes up an emphasis of Käsemann and Stuhlmacher on obedience as a link between justification and last judgment.¹⁰ Donfried then stresses that it is obedience and sanctification, measured not by the number of good works but by faithfulness, which will be judged at the last day.¹¹ Donfried sorts Paul's judgment language into four functional categories: (1) universal judgment of all;

³ Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 75 and 262.

⁴ Braun, *Gerichtsgedanke*, 34-35, 38, 44-45, 92.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 96-97. See also Peter Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus* (FRLANT 87; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 51; Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 3-5.

⁶ Arthur Titius, *Der Paulinismus unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Seligkeit*, part 2 of *Die neutestamentliche Lehre von der Seligkeit und ihre Bedeutung für die Gegenwart* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1900), 152.

⁷ H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul's Conceptions of the Last Things* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), 201.

⁸ Watson, "Justified by Faith," 213-20; Wilfried Joest, *Gesetz und Freiheit: Das Problem des Tertius Usus Legis bei Luther und die neutestamentliche Paränese* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1951), 177-85.

⁹ Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes*, 228-36.

¹⁰ Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment," 94-95.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 102. Synofzik (*Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 152-54) accuses Donfried of synergism.

(2) judgment of Christians who have remained obedient; (3) judgment of the apostolic work of Christian missionaries (especially in 1 Cor 3:5-15 and 4:5); (4) judgment of Christians who have not been obedient.¹² This article is a step toward clarification of the problem, but his theological categorization is weakened by questionable exegesis of 1 Cor 3:5-15, 4:5, and 5:5.

A final and frequently asserted solution is to separate in Paul's theology the judgment which decides salvation from the judgment which allocates different degrees of recompense and reward to faithful Christians. Implied already by Kabisch, this view is held in various forms by Teichmann, Kühl, Devor, and E. P. Sanders.¹³ The primary texts used to support this view are 1 Cor 3:8-15 and 4:5, although these studies by and large make little attempt to relate these statements to the Corinthian context. This view is also the main thesis of the full study by Lieselotte Mattern. In her view judgment is essentially negative and antithetical to justification in Paul. The Christian will not be condemned, in spite of sins or unfit work.¹⁴ Only if one ceases to be a Christian is condemnation possible. But the Christian does face a future judgment over how he or she was a Christian, on the basis of the person's work. Here salvation is assured, but there will be varying degrees of reward.¹⁵ Mattern's exegesis is extensive and mostly very perceptive. She pays some attention to the varying theological functions of judgment statements in different contexts, although in the end her systematic interests tend to short-circuit the exegetical possibilities.¹⁶ Also, her strong emphasis on the definitive act of past justification tends to cause her to downplay the future and corporate nature of divine judgment.¹⁷

A second group of studies is not explicitly concerned with the systematic relationship of judgment to justification but rather with the concept of retribution or reward. G. P. Wetter offers an interesting but somewhat peculiar study. He argues that for Paul such concepts as *ὁργή*

¹² Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment," 103-110.

¹³ Richard Kabisch, *Die Eschatologie des Paulus in ihren Zusammenhängen mit dem Gesamtbegriff des Paulinismus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1893), 247-49; Teichmann, *Die paulinischen Vorstellungen*, 79-82 and 103; Kühl, *Rechtfertigung*, 25-28; Devor, "The Concept of Judgment," 418-36, with reference to parallels in Jewish writings and the Gospels on 420-21; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 516-18.

¹⁴ Mattern, *Verständnis des Gerichtes*, 58-68, 96-111. Especially important for her are 1 Cor 3:15, 5:5, and 11:31-32.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 141-93. Again, 1 Cor 3:5-15 and 4:4-5 are her key texts, discussed on pp. 168-86.

¹⁶ See the comments of Walter Schmithals in his review of the book in *TLZ*93 (1968), 585-86.

¹⁷ See the comments of Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 5-7.

and κριμα are impersonal forces, operating by themselves apart from God, similar to the Greek concept of εἰμαρμένη, fate.¹⁸ Christ has freed the believer from these powers, and therefore Paul no longer believes in a real future judgment.¹⁹ Paul does still use judgment conceptions, but in a purely formal way with some tension between the expression and his real intention, mostly for parenetic purposes.²⁰ Wetter denies that Paul has any idea of degrees of future reward, citing 1 Cor 3:15 as the clearest proof that in fact for Paul "salvation" and "reward" are synonymous, both referring to eternal life.²¹ Wetter more than most scholars tries to set Paul's thought in the context of both Greek and Jewish conceptions of judgment, but his understanding of Judaism is dated and his exegesis is rarely convincing.

In the view of Floyd Filson Paul's piety was centered around the idea of last judgment with its rewards and punishments.²² The believer has been saved from the "recompense principle" by Christ's death but will still be held accountable at the final judgment for post-baptismal sins.²³ This judgment will result in individual rewards or punishments corresponding to individual merit and service.²⁴ Filson does little exegesis of the texts, and his treatment is rather superficial.

Didier wants to find out whether Paul really used the concept of future reward and punishment as a motivation for a moral life. Wetter had said, "no"; Filson had said, "yes." Didier's answer is that Paul indeed does have such a conception of degrees of recompense which he uses for ethical motivation, but this is secondary to the more positive parenetic motivation of the Christian's unity with Christ.²⁵ Didier's letter-by-letter exegesis allows him to do some good interpretation, but ultimately his systematic concerns become too determinative. In all three of these studies—by Wetter, Filson, and Didier—we see that judgment statements in 1 Corinthians, particularly chapters 3-4, play a pivotal role.

All of the above studies on divine judgment in Paul are hampered by two difficulties inherent in their approach: they all end up studying Paul's judgment statements using as the hermeneutical key other sorts of concepts, such as justification by faith, which are rarely brought by

¹⁸ Wetter, *Vergeltungsgedanke*, 53-54, 64, and 83-85.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 75.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 75, 89-90, and 154.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 113-15, 128-29, 148, 151-52, and 155.

²² Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense*, 3-9.

²³ *Ibid.*, 15-17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 91-92, 102, and 105-113. 1 Cor 3:5-15 is his key text.

²⁵ Didier, *Désintéressement du Chrétien*, 220-23. See the favorable review of Didier by Raymond E. Brown in *CBQ* 18 (1956), 328-30.

Paul into explicit connection with judgment statements. In fact, it is hardly noticed how isolated judgment statements really are in Paul, not only from justification language but also from other eschatological motifs such as resurrection. The result is that the judgment statements are not allowed to stand in their own contexts, but are pressed to answer questions raised from elsewhere in Paul. The second problem in these studies is that they all in some measure fail to give adequate attention to the specific function of the judgment statements in Paul's argument addressed to the particular situation. They tend to treat the judgment statements on a level of systematic abstraction which they probably did not have for Paul.

Two recent major studies have attempted to move the study of judgment in Paul into more helpful directions. The study by Calvin Roetzel begins with an overview of previous scholarship in which he criticizes the tendency to treat judgment in relation to justification by faith.²⁶ Taking his cue from Albert Schweitzer, Roetzel downplays justification as a central concept in Paul and treats judgment under the rubric of the tension between the present and future, a tension worked out in the corporate body of the church.²⁷ He then devotes a lengthy section to the Jewish background of Paul's conception of judgment, an analysis which is concerned to point out the corporate nature of judgment language in Jewish texts.²⁸ This is the most extensive and best study on judgment in Jewish texts available, asking not only about the content of judgment conceptions but also how these functioned in the actual communities to which they were addressed. After surveying Paul's judgment language and themes, Roetzel unfolds his main argument, treating first the church as the instrument of judgment²⁹ and then the church as the object of judgment.³⁰ In both of these sections texts from 1 Corinthians play a central role, since this letter has much to say both about discipline within the church and future judgment as it affects the church. But Roetzel has some difficulty explaining how the two aspects of judgment are related to each other, mostly because he is so intent on seeing the corporate aspect of judgment that he misses the important interplay between individual and community in such texts as 1 Cor 3:10-17, 4:1-5, and 11:27-34. Roetzel makes a real advance in the study of judgment in Paul by treating the Jewish background more adequately, by breaking away from the problem of justification by faith, by trying to see the

²⁶ Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 1, 9-10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 10-11, 107-108.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 14-67.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 112-36.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 135-76.

function of judgment conceptions in particular texts, and by seeing the close relationship between judgment conceptions and the church, especially in 1 Corinthians. Yet his two-fold outline, in which the church is either the object or the subject of judgment, proves to be something of a Procrustean bed into which all the texts cannot easily be fitted.³¹

Ernst Synofzik sets his study in dialogue with previous theological investigations of Paul's judgment statements, especially the study by Herbert Braun, accusing them either of seeing judgment as a relic from Paul's Jewish past or of offering a synergistic interpretation.³² Yet he makes a genuine methodological advance by analyzing Paul's judgment texts from a formal and tradition-historical perspective. He wants to find out how Paul interpreted the judgment traditions which he received, what function each judgment saying has in its context, and what theological place each saying has within the whole Pauline kerygma.³³ Synofzik is the only scholar to date to attempt a complete formal and functional categorization of all of Paul's judgment statements. His major categories are future judgment sayings in thanksgivings and prayers, in polemical texts, in personal parenthesis, in general parenthesis, in texts dealing with justification, and in Christological texts. Synofzik concludes that Paul uses many apocalyptic traditions about judgment, but never as a topic in its own right; rather, judgment statements always occur as an "Argumentationsmittel" in diverse contexts. There is no systematic uniformity in Paul's use of judgment traditions, yet judgment is an integral part of his theology, not just a relic.³⁴ Because of the survey nature of his work, Synofzik's exegesis is mostly superficial, necessarily assuming much about the contexts of the judgment texts. His understanding of Judaism is inadequate, and his theological concerns are often imported in an unhelpful way.³⁵ Yet Synofzik's study is a major advance, best described as a work that clears the ground and makes a preliminary survey of the terrain so that in the future more exact work can be done.³⁶

³¹ It is not surprising that Roetzel's study was heavily criticized, especially in Germany, for his failure to deal with judgment in connection with justification by faith. See the reviews by Ulrich Luz in *TLZ* 99 (1974), 424-26, and by Robert C. Tannehill in *Int* 28 (1974), 120-22. See also the comments by Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 151-52.

³² Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 5.

³³ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 105-106.

³⁵ For example, he criticizes Mattern's exegesis as "synergism," as if this were a legitimate category for the historical treatment of the NT, and he frequently, with little relation to his exegesis, feels compelled to deny that Paul has a concept of judgment according to works.

³⁶ See the review of Synofzik by Calvin Roetzel in *JBL* 98 (1979), 452-54. See also the comments by Watson, "Justified by Faith," 210-12.

This survey reveals that past treatments of judgment language in Paul have not yielded satisfactory results and that there are some questions which need to be addressed with greater methodological clarity. (1) Most treatments have been governed by preconceived systematic theological questions. (2) Much of the exegesis has given little attention to the function of judgment statements in particular contexts. Synofzik and Roetzel make a beginning in a more fruitful direction, but each of them also tries to find too quickly a systematic pattern. (3) There is now a need for studies on particular judgment texts rather than broad surveys. (4) Very little has been done to set Paul's conceptions within Greco-Roman judgment traditions; most studies do not mention this side at all, with the partial exception of Braun and Wetter. Treatment of Jewish traditions is more frequent, but only Roetzel avoids a theologically biased interpretation of the Jewish texts. (5) The importance of the parenetic function of judgment statements in Paul has increasingly come to be recognized, but the diverse dynamics of this function have not been fully explored. (6) In most studies judgment is not seen adequately within the whole range of Paul's future expectations. (7) The reward motif in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 is seen by many as a pivotal problem in assessing Paul's judgment conceptions, but little has been done to show how this motif functions within the context of the Corinthian dissensions discussed in 1 Cor 1-4.

2. *Approaches to Paul's Use of Apocalyptic Eschatology*

It is also important for this study to see the different points of view from which Paul's eschatology has been studied and how 1 Corinthians has played a role in theories about Paul's view of the future hope. The different goals with which Paul's eschatology has been approached have led to a wide variety of views on the importance of the future for Paul.

The first spur to modern critical research on Paul's apocalyptic eschatology came from the study of the history of religions at the end of the nineteenth century. Richard Kabisch, whose work was little regarded in his own time but was resurrected by Albert Schweitzer,³⁷ was the first to study Paul's eschatology primarily in the context of Jewish apocalyptic theology. In the view of Kabisch, physical death and literal future life were the great concerns of Paul, rather than life as an ethical quality, as most nineteenth century interpreters held.³⁸ So began the role

³⁷ Albert Schweitzer, *Paul and His Interpreters: A Critical History* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1912), 58-62.

³⁸ Kabisch, *Eschatologie des Paulus*, 71, 75, 93, 103, 109-10, 134.

of future eschatology in the long struggle to free the interpretation of Paul from the confines imposed by modern religious experience.³⁹ Although the attempt to locate Paul in the history of religions has become less of an explicit goal in NT scholarship, after Kabisch Paul's obvious debt to Jewish apocalyptic traditions could not be ignored.

When Albert Schweitzer turned his attention from Jesus to Paul in his widely separated two books,⁴⁰ his goal was to use eschatology as the key to understanding the development of dogma from Jesus to Paul and beyond.⁴¹ In his treatment of Paul, Schweitzer used Paul's apocalyptic orientation as a polemical weapon against any view that saw an essential hellenization of Christianity prior to or in Paul.⁴² Schweitzer also posited the "delay" of the eschatological fulfillment as the central impetus for the development of Christian theology, as shown above all in Paul's creation of the idea of a mystic presence of Christ through the Spirit.⁴³ Although in his limited understanding of Judaism and on most particular points in his understanding of Paul Schweitzer is generally regarded to have been wrong, his basic thesis that Paul can only be understood if full weight is given to his eschatology has been very influential.⁴⁴

It is here that Ernst Käsemann's stimulating proposals about early Christian apocalyptic should be placed, for Käsemann, like Schweitzer, was above all interested in eschatology as the key to the puzzle of the

³⁹ See William A. Beardslee, "New Testament Apocalyptic in Recent Interpretation," *Int* 25 (1971), 420-27.

⁴⁰ *Paul and His Interpreters* (1911) and *Mysticism of Paul* (1930).

⁴¹ Schweitzer, *Paul and His Interpreters*, VI-X.

⁴² *Ibid.* VIII and 238; *Mysticism of Paul*, VIII. Schweitzer was reacting against the history of religious interpreters who saw pervasive influence from the hellenistic environment on early Christianity. Further, he saw the attempt to "hellenize" Paul as an illegitimate means to make Paul relevant to the modern theologian; see *Paul and His Interpreters*, X.

⁴³ Schweitzer, *Mysticism of Paul*, 3, 23, and 92. An example of his concern to explain the origin of things by means of eschatology is his treatment of the sacraments; see page 230. On Schweitzer's contribution see E. Earle Ellis, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 25; and Werner Georg Kümmel, "Die 'konsequente Eschatologie' Albert Schweitzers im Urteil der Zeitgenossen," in *Heilsgeschehen und Geschichte, Gesammelte Aufsätze 1933-1964* (ed. Erich Grässer, Otto Merk, and Adolf Fritz; Marburger Theologische Studien 3; Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1965), 335-38.

⁴⁴ Kümmel, "Die 'konsequente Eschatologie' Albert Schweitzers," 338. Both Hans-Joachim Schoeps (*Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961]) and Johannes Munck (*Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* [Richmond, Virginia: John Knox, 1952]) agree that eschatology is the key to Paul's thought. The best discussion of Schweitzer's views on Judaism is in W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (Revised Edition; Harper Torchbooks; New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, 1967), VII-XV.

development of early Christian theology.⁴⁵ Käsemann developed his views in a series of articles.⁴⁶ His thesis runs something like this: Although Jesus himself did not proclaim an apocalyptic message,⁴⁷ the community immediately after Easter engaged in a new interpretation of the kerygma and replaced Jesus' message with a new apocalyptic message about Jesus.⁴⁸ This new enthusiastic apocalyptic expectation of the imminent end was promulgated by prophets, who issued "sentences of holy law" which proclaimed God's imminent judgment.⁴⁹ Eventually the imminent expectation was lost, a development which heralds "early catholicism."⁵⁰ But this latter development was anticipated and prepared for by the growth of "hellenistic enthusiasm," which transformed Jewish Christian apocalyptic into a present eschatology. Paul, especially in 1 Corinthians, sets apocalyptic eschatology against this enthusiasm.⁵¹ There are a number of problems with Käsemann's thesis, which I will discuss later in this study: his definition of "apocalyptic" and "enthusiasm," his picture of the polemic in 1 Corinthians, and the question whether eschatology can be used as the essential explanatory principle for the development of doctrine. Suffice it to say for now that his thesis has been very influential, and most subsequent treatments of Paul's eschatology have taken Käsemann as their point of departure. Further, it is clear that Käsemann's thesis to a large extent stands or falls on the viability of his treatment of the eschatological concerns of 1 Corinthians.

Another type of investigation of the eschatology of Paul has been oriented to the thesis that only by seeing future eschatology or apocalyptic as the driving force behind all of Paul's thought can an adequate understanding of his theology be attained. As I have stated, it was Albert Schweitzer who first brought the centrality of eschatology to the forefront of Pauline scholarship. Although Schweitzer had a large influence on subsequent scholarship, attention from about 1920 to 1960 was

⁴⁵ Ernst Käsemann, "Paul and Early Catholicism," in *New Testament Questions of Today* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 236-37.

⁴⁶ "Sentences of Holy Law in the New Testament," "The Beginning of Christian Theology," "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," and "Paul and Early Catholicism." All are now in *New Testament Questions of Today*. On Käsemann's views on apocalyptic, see Bernhard Ehler, *Die Herrschaft des Gekreuzigten: Ernst Käsemanns Frage nach der Mitte der Schrift* (BZNW 46; Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), 291-99.

⁴⁷ Käsemann, "Beginnings of Christian Theology," 100-101.

⁴⁸ Thus "apocalyptic was the mother of all Christian theology" ("Beginnings of Christian Theology," 102). See also "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," 114-15.

⁴⁹ "Sentences of Holy Law," 73 and 78; "Beginnings of Christian Theology," 83-86 and 92.

⁵⁰ "Paul and Early Catholicism," 237.

⁵¹ "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," 130-32.

directed mostly to the existential interpretation of eschatology (see below). It was Käsemann who revived once again the thesis that eschatology in its undiminished future dimension is central for Paul.⁵² There is an ambiguity in Käsemann's analysis, however. On the one hand, he seems to suggest that apocalyptic eschatology is merely a polemical weapon against "hellenistic enthusiasm" (the famous "eschatological reservation"). But on the other hand he wants to affirm that Paul shared with primitive Christianity the view of apocalyptic expectation as the heart of the Gospel.⁵³ As we shall see, a major question which runs through most recent work on Paul's eschatology is related to these two sides of Käsemann's thesis. If a future motif can be shown to have a polemical or parenetic function, can one still say that its content is an essential part of Paul's theology? Or is this function evidence that for Paul future eschatology is limited to a subsidiary role?

As part of his study of Paul's understanding of history Ulrich Luz analyzes Paul's statements about the future, with a concern not only for the conceptions of Paul's eschatology but also for the functions of the texts.⁵⁴ Luz divides the statements about the future into two groups. First are statements about the future life, the resurrection of the dead, and salvation. These are largely indicative, grounded in the kerygma, stress the certainty of future existence with Christ, and are mostly Paul's own formulations.⁵⁵ The second group are statements about future judgment, the day of the Lord, and the parousia. These motifs tend to be parenetic and are mostly traditional formulations mentioned briefly in isolated contexts.⁵⁶ Thus Luz thinks that these two groups of future statements had different functions in Paul's theology and were derived from different lines of thinking. For Luz, although future statements play a variety of roles in Paul, they are an essential part of Paul's view of the life of the believer.⁵⁷ This is true even though eschatology becomes a major theme only because of particular situations, is not treated systematically by Paul, and often serves a parenetic function. Luz is critical

⁵² Käsemann, "Beginnings of Christian Theology," "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," and "'The Righteousness of God' in Paul," in *New Testament Questions of Today* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 168-82. See the responses to Käsemann by Gerhard Ebeling and Ernst Fuchs in *Apocalypticism (Journal for Theology and the Church 6)*; ed. Robert W. Funk; New York: Herder & Herder, 1969), 47-68 and 69-98 respectively.

⁵³ See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 17.

⁵⁴ Ulrich Luz, *Des Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* (BEvT, Theologische Abhandlungen 49; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1968), 301-317, with exegetical studies of selected texts on 318-86.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 303-310.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 311-316.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 356-58.

of the way Käsemann treats apocalyptic as an "eschatological reservation," a polemical weapon against an enthusiasm which stresses present fulfillment. In Luz's view, Paul himself makes plenty of such "enthusiastic" statements, does not set enthusiasm and apocalyptic against each other in this way, and polemicizes against over-zealous enthusiasm more by reference to the weakness of present Christian existence than by a stress on futurity.⁵⁸ Although the brevity of Luz's analysis leads to some lack of clarity, his views go far to set the discussion on a helpful track.⁵⁹

The most forceful and sustained argument in favor of the centrality of apocalyptic eschatology in Paul is the recent work by J. Christiaan Beker.⁶⁰ He takes the apocalyptic interpretation of the Christ-event to be the "deep structure," the indispensable "coherent center" of Paul's theology. For Beker, the apocalyptic center of Paul's theology is the theocentric theme of the coming triumph of God.⁶¹ This coherent center holds even though Paul uses a variety of surface structures in different situations (contingency). An essential text for Beker is 1 Corinthians 15, in which he follows Käsemann in seeing a polemic against Corinthian enthusiasm. Beker asks why Paul should try to impose this apocalyptic world view of 1 Cor 15 on Greek-influenced Christians who have difficulty accepting it. The answer: because the apocalyptic eschatology is not simply part of a world view which can be eliminated; it is the heart of Paul's Gospel.⁶² But Beker's case is weakened by his vague and limited understanding of "apocalyptic." He fails to see how future motifs function in different ways in different contexts.⁶³ Further, as I hope to show later, the understanding of 1 Cor 15 which Beker shares with Käsemann will not hold up in the light of a more adequate exegesis.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 309, 336, 384-86. On the term "enthusiasm" see below.

⁵⁹ Two studies of future eschatology and Christology in Paul take a point of view similar to that of Luz in that they both recognize a variety of functions of eschatology in Paul but also affirm its central importance in explicating his Christology: Franzjosef Fritzsche, *Christologie und Eschatologie bei Paulus* (Forschung zur Bibel 35; Würzburg: Echter, 1979); Hans-Heinrich Schade, *Apokalyptische Christologie bei Paulus: Studien zum Zusammenhang von Christologie und Eschatologie in den Paulusbriefen* (Göttinger Theologische Arbeiten 18; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981).

⁶⁰ *Paul the Apostle and his further reflections in Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel: The Coming Triumph of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982).

⁶¹ Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, IX and 15-18. See the new preface in the 1984 paperback edition, XIV.

⁶² Ibid., 156-57, 163, 170-71.

⁶³ Beker does try to address this problem in his new preface to the 1984 paperback edition, p. XV. On pages XX-XXI he sees the need to relate apocalyptic to actual experiences of Paul and his communities. See the discussion of Beker's work by Vincent P. Branick ("Apocalyptic Paul?," *CBQ* 47 [1985], 664), who thinks that Beker fails to see how Paul is a transitional thinker, pointing forward to the development of a more realized eschatology.

On the other side of the fence from Schweitzer, Käsemann, Luz, and Beker are studies which take their cue from Rudolf Bultmann. These argue that Paul indeed has taken apocalyptic motifs from his tradition, but that his own interpretation of these motifs moves toward a more present and existential eschatology.⁶⁴ Bultmann himself reacted against Käsemann's emphasis on apocalyptic eschatology in Paul by reaffirming his view of the difference between eschatology (general conceptions about the future of the individual) and apocalyptic (actually fixing the time of the end of the world). Bultmann agreed that Paul has both present and future eschatology, but in Paul the emphasis is on the present.⁶⁵ For Bultmann, apocalyptic was part of the mythological worldview which Paul himself had begun to interpret existentially.⁶⁶ The emphasis on present eschatology also meant that Paul's central focus was on "anthropology" and the historical existence of the individual. Käsemann, on the other hand, used his emphasis on apocalyptic eschatology to affirm the cosmic, theocentric, and corporate character of the Pauline kerygma. The subsequent discussion of apocalyptic eschatology in Paul has been overly captive to the peculiar terms of this theological debate about the meaning of justification by faith.⁶⁷

A very influential article by Jürgen Becker appearing in 1970 took the offensive against Käsemann's thesis that in Paul the decisive action of God is future, cosmic, and corporate. Becker favored Bultmann's view that the decisive action of God is directed in the present to the individual.⁶⁸ Becker defends his thesis by using a tradition-historical method.⁶⁹ Paul uses apocalyptic traditions, but only to serve some present-

⁶⁴ An earlier American scholar, Frank C. Porter, had similarly held that for Paul the decisive events had happened in Christ and that therefore Paul spiritualizes the apocalyptic hope. Porter criticizes Schweitzer as one-sided in his positive view of apocalyptic in Paul ("The Place of Apocalyptic Conceptions in the Thought of Paul," *JBL* 41 [1922], 184-87).

⁶⁵ Rudolf Bultmann, "Ist die Apokalypik die Mutter der christlichen Theologie?," in *Apophoreta: Festschrift für Ernst Haenchen* (ed. W. Eltester; BZNW 30; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1964), 64-67.

⁶⁶ See William Baird, "The Problem of the Gnostic Redeemer and Bultmann's Program of Demythologizing," in *Theologie Crucis-Signum Crucis: Festschrift für Erich Dinkler zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. Carl Andresen and Günter Klein; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1979), 52-53.

⁶⁷ See Darrell J. Doughty, "History and Eschatology in the Theology of Paul: An Outline of the Present Discussion," *Drew Gateway* 42 (1971-72), 168-87; he sides with Bultmann. Another follower of Bultmann's interpretation is Walter Schmithals, *The Apocalyptic Movement: Introduction and Interpretation* (Nashville & New York: Abingdon, 1975), 160, 164, and 171. Also Henry M. Shires, *The Eschatology of Paul in the Light of Modern Scholarship* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966).

⁶⁸ Jürgen Becker, "Erwägungen zur apokalyptischen Tradition in der paulinischen Theologie," *EvT* 30 (1970), 593-94.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 608.

oriented argumentative or parenetic function.⁷⁰ For example, although judgment motifs in 1 Cor 3:13-15 and 4:5 and imminent expectation in 1 Cor 7:31 do assume a cosmic scope, Paul's interest in using these motifs is not cosmology or the future for its own sake but rather personal admonition.⁷¹ By playing off the traditional motif against Paul's interpretation of it Becker can argue that Paul's use of apocalyptic eschatology is limited and that Paul's own real interests lie elsewhere.

Two other major German studies of Paul's eschatology have used this same method to argue the same case in more detail.⁷² Baumgarten's work is a very detailed study of the whole spectrum of apocalyptic eschatology in Paul, especially the two most important themes, parousia/judgment and resurrection/eternal life. Baumgarten concludes that Paul reinterprets his apocalyptic traditions by reducing the mythological elements, by de-emphasizing the time framework, by modifying them through his Christology, and by using them to stress either responsibility or comfort in the present.⁷³ All of Paul's apocalyptic traditions, parousia and judgment in particular, function mainly as parenetic motivation and as polemic against Gnostic enthusiasm (he agrees with this aspect of Käsemann's view on 1 Corinthians).⁷⁴ In the context of the Bultmann-Käsemann debate Baumgarten argues that Paul is not interested in cosmology, but neither is he individualistic; Paul's main categories are Christology, anthropology, and ecclesiology.⁷⁵

Baumgarten does much good exegesis of the texts, and he shows convincingly that Paul's apocalyptic eschatology is not his dominant focus. Beker would have done well to pay more attention to Baumgarten's exegesis and conclusions. Yet there are two problems which make his understanding of Paul's apocalyptic eschatology inadequate. First is his use of the tradition-historical method. It is doubtful, in my opinion, that he can really determine in most cases what is pre-Pauline tradition by means of word statistics and formal structures. If we assume that Paul himself played a role in forming traditions and was himself influenced by them, then separating the two elements in a given text is a hazardous undertaking. Further, even if such a separation could be

⁷⁰ Ibid., 599-600 and 607.

⁷¹ Ibid., 602-604.

⁷² Jörg Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypitik: Die Auslegung apokalyptischer Überlieferungen in den echten Paulusbriefen* (WMANT 44; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1975). Walter Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn: Zur Bedeutung und Funktion der Parousieausagen bei Paulus* (Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie 15; Frankfurt am Main: Peter D. Lang, 1981).

⁷³ Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypitik*, 2-4, 57-59, 120, and 233.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 33, 67-68, 196, and 230.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 243.

convincingly done, it is still questionable whether one can draw conclusions from this about what was central or peripheral to Paul. This leads into the second difficulty. Baumgarten assumes that apocalyptic eschatology is interested in the future for its own sake. Therefore, whenever he can demonstrate that Paul uses apocalyptic to draw parenetic or comforting consequences for the present, he believes that he has shown that Paul is not really interested in apocalyptic. This simply misunderstands the function of apocalyptic eschatology.⁷⁶ More than once Baumgarten implies that true apocalyptic is a "Flucht aus der Gegenwart in eine bessere Zukunft."⁷⁷ But this escapist view of apocalyptic sets up a straw man which Baumgarten can easily knock down, for, of course, all apocalyptic eschatology has a relevance to the situation of the present community. Thus Baumgarten inadvertently proves the opposite of what he intends: Paul does indeed see a great importance in apocalyptic eschatology. This importance can be seen precisely in the fact that he makes such consistent and diverse use of it to motivate parenesis, to explicate the results of the Christ-event, to comfort, and to polemicize. Thus Baumgarten's work clearly shows the inadequacy of a one-sided stress on the theological function of apocalyptic eschatology without considering in a broader way how future eschatology functions in an actual community.⁷⁸

The work by Walter Radl on the parousia in Paul is similar to Baumgarten's in approach and conclusions. In his view the motif of the parousia and imminent expectation is de-emphasized by Paul in favor of other, less time-conditioned, future expectations and of Paul's present eschatology.⁷⁹ In spite of some helpful exegesis his work is subject to the same criticisms as Baumgarten's work. Further, Radl somewhat confuses the matter by treating the parousia as a separate motif when, as he acknowledges, the expectation of the parousia is almost always dominated by conceptions of judgment.

No matter whether scholars have looked at Paul's apocalyptic eschatology in order to locate him in the history of religions or in the history of doctrine, in order to stress the decisive future orientation of his theology or to stress the present elements as more characteristic, one

⁷⁶ See the review of Baumgarten's book by Jürgen Lebram in *NedTTs* 33 (1979), 309-11.

⁷⁷ Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypik*, 120 and 195.

⁷⁸ The unpublished 1975 Princeton dissertation by Kenneth W. Rogahn ("The Function of Future-Eschatological Statements in the Pauline Epistles") likewise argues for Bultmann's view of future eschatology in Paul, since in his view Paul uses future eschatology for three functions: hortatory, restraining enthusiasm, and comforting; see pp. 173-74.

⁷⁹ Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn*, 12, 196, and 256.

weakness has plagued all these approaches: there is very little concern with the role apocalyptic eschatology played in the actual circumstances of people in the Christian communities addressed by Paul. This is not to say that the theological questions are not important; but the theological questions cannot be adequately answered unless theology is seen less as a doctrinal exercise and more as a dynamic force within a community. Theological and social function cannot be separated. Some recent studies have begun the task of analyzing the apocalyptic eschatology of Paul with the question of social function in mind.

Although Amos Wilder had earlier called for a recognition of the social setting of eschatology and examined apocalyptic eschatology as a "social symbol,"⁸⁰ it was not until the work of John Gager that sociological methods began to be applied to the study of early Christian apocalyptic eschatology.⁸¹ Gager draws on sociological studies of various "millenarian movements" to explain aspects of the rise of Christianity in terms of relative deprivation and cognitive dissonance. Although Gager was a pioneer in using comparative studies to help understand early Christianity, his work is too superficially engaged with the texts, too broad in scope, and too much interested in explaining the origin of Christianity to be very convincing.

A more promising application of sociological perspectives to the study of Paul's future eschatology is provided by Wayne Meeks.⁸² Unlike Gager's use of comparative theories to explain the origin of the whole movement of early Christianity, Meeks opts for using a sociological perspective to better understand the function of eschatological beliefs in specific settings, namely, the Pauline congregations. It is Meeks' contention that we cannot hope to understand beliefs about the future without seeing how they actually function in groups. In a brief treatment of 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, and 1 Corinthians Meeks stresses that apocalyptic language can function to reinforce "the sense of uniqueness and

⁸⁰ Amos N. Wilder, "Eschatological Imagery and Earthly Circumstance," *NTS* 5 (1958-59), 230 and 243-44; "Social Factors in Early Christian Eschatology," in *Early Christian Origins: Studies in Honor of Harold R. Willoughby* (ed. Allen Wikgren; Chicago: Quadrangle, 1961), 70.

⁸¹ In an earlier article ("Functional Diversity in Paul's Use of End-Time Language," *JBL* 89 [1970], 325-37) Gager speaks of functions of "end-time" language but has no clear sociological method in mind. The real beginning of this work is in Gager's book, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1975), 19-65.

⁸² Wayne A. Meeks, "Social Functions of Apocalyptic Language in Pauline Christianity," in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala, August 12-17, 1979* (ed. David Hellholm; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1983), 687-705. His results are presented in more summary form in his book *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1983), 171-80.

solidarity of the community'' (1 Thessalonians), to provide a warrant for innovations (Galatians), or ''to restrain innovation and to counsel stability and order'' (1 Corinthians). Common to all these diverse functions is the goal of the solidarity and stability of congregations. Although Meeks concludes that one can, with caution, call Pauline Christianity a ''millenarian movement,'' this label is not central to his main purpose, which is to show that analogies with modern apocalyptic movements can help us to understand the function of Paul's apocalyptic statements. Meeks' programmatic work points the way for future more detailed exegetical study of Paul's apocalyptic eschatology in particular texts.

From this survey of scholarship on the eschatology of Paul, the following conclusions relevant to this study can be drawn: (1) The pervasive theological issue is the relation of present Christian existence to the future hope; this tension is reflected in the use of 1 Corinthians in the discussion, for the tension within Paul is analogous to the supposed conflict between the present eschatology of the Corinthians and Paul's use of future eschatology against it. (2) Käsemann's thesis that Paul uses apocalyptic eschatology as a theological polemic against the Corinthian realized eschatology has been used by other recent scholars to come to a conclusion opposed to that of Käsemann, i.e., that future eschatology is not essential to Paul's theology. Is this view of 1 Corinthians an adequate interpretation of the evidence, and does it pose a misleading question? (3) The question of the function of apocalyptic eschatology in Paul is seen in a one-sided way if social function is ignored. Failure to see this has skewed the assessment of apocalyptic eschatology in 1 Corinthians and thus in all of Paul. (4) Thus a fresh exegetical analysis of the social function of future eschatology in 1 Corinthians will have implications for the whole study of the eschatology of Paul.

3. Approaches to Future Eschatology in 1 Corinthians

The Rise of the "Realized Eschatology" Hypothesis

If the consensus view in NT scholarship is that one major issue behind the various problems addressed in 1 Corinthians is the conflict between the ''realized eschatology'' of the Corinthians and the future eschatology of Paul,⁸³ how did this consensus arise, on what evidence is it

⁸³ Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 179.

based, and have any voices of protest been raised against it?⁸⁴ From the seminal article of F. C. Baur on the "parties" in Corinth⁸⁵ up to the turn of the century the dominant view was that Paul's main fight in Corinth was against Judaizers.⁸⁶ The best evidence for this, however, was found in 2 Corinthians. Many recognized gentile hellenistic influence behind some of the particular ethical problems addressed in 1 Corinthians,⁸⁷ but there was no mention of a unified front behind all the problems of 1 Corinthians or of any conflict over eschatological views.

It was the work of Wilhelm Lütgert which broke the stranglehold of the Baur-initiated consensus and pushed the study of the Corinthian situation in a new direction, a direction which has been dominant ever since.⁸⁸ Lütgert begins by agreeing with most of his predecessors that on one side in Corinth Paul faced Jewish-Christian legalists, but he argues that on the other side Paul also faced a movement which, starting from Paul's own preaching of freedom but going radically beyond

⁸⁴ For surveys of scholarship on the issues behind 1 Corinthians see especially Dieter Georgi, *Die Gegner des Paulus in 2. Korintherbrief: Studien zur Religiösen Propaganda in der Spätantike* (WMANT 11; Neukirchen: Erziehungsvereins, 1964), 7-16; Nils A. Dahl, "Paul and the Church at Corinth according to 1 Corinthians 1:10-4:21," in *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), 40-44; Jack H. Wilson, "The Corinthians Who Say There is No Resurrection of the Dead," *ZNW* 59 (1968), 90-107; Christian Machalet, "Paulus und seine Gegner: Eine Untersuchung zu den Korintherbriefen," in *Theokratia: Festgabe für Karl Heinrich Rengstorf zum 70. Geburtstag* (Jahrbuch des Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum II, 1970-72; ed. W. Dietrich et al.; Leiden: Brill, 1973), 183-90. In my survey which follows I deal with the issue of the Corinthian situation only as it concerns the subject of eschatology. Thus I do not deal directly with the issue of the "parties" of 1 Cor 1:12 or with the history-of-religions context of the Corinthian position.

⁸⁵ Ferdinand C. Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des paulinischen und petrinischen Christentums in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostle Petrus in Rom," *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie* 4 (1831), 61-206.

⁸⁶ See the series of articles by Adolf Hilgenfeld in *ZWT* 8 (1865), 241-266; 9 (1866), 337-354; 14 (1871), 99-120; 15 (1872), 200-226; 31 (1888), 159-206. See also the article by Benjamin Wismar Bacon, "The Christ-Party in Corinth," *The Expositor* 8 (1914), 399-415.

⁸⁷ Adolf Hilgenfeld, "Paulus und Korinth," *ZWT* 31 (1888), 179; C. F. Georg Heinrici, "Die Christengemeinde Korinths und die religiösen Genossenschaften der Griechen," *ZWT* 19 (1876), 465-526; Carl Weizsäcker, "Paulus und die Gemeinde in Korinth," *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie* 21 (1876), 604 and 619.

⁸⁸ Wilhelm Lütgert, *Freiheitspredigt und Schwarmgeister in Korinth: Ein Beitrag zur Charakteristik der Christuspartei* (BFCT 12, vol. 3; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1908), 10-157 (this original article is longer than the separately published book, which cuts off the last two chapters). On Lütgert see Ernst Käsemann, "Die Legitimität des Apostles: Eine Untersuchung zu II Korinther 10-13," *ZNW* 41 (1942), 34; Dahl, "Paul and the Church at Corinth," 41; Georgi, *Die Gegner des Paulus*, 11-12; Machalet, "Paulus und seine Gegner," 185; Walter Schmithals, *Paul and the Gnostics* (Nashville & New York: Abingdon, 1972), 242-44.

it, had the piety of libertine pneumatics.⁸⁹ He identifies this movement with the "Christ party" of 1 Cor 1:12, takes 2 Cor 10-12 to be a direct polemic against these opponents, and takes 1 Cor 1:17-2:16 and some other parts of 1 Corinthians to be an indirect argument against these pneumatics, insofar as they had influenced the members of the Corinthian congregation.⁹⁰ Lütgert saw these people as Gnostics and connected them with similar people behind the polemic of Philippians, 2 Thessalonians, and the Pastorals.⁹¹ Yet he did not mean "Gnostics" in the history-of-religions sense of a theological system like that of Gnosticism in the second century, but only in the sense of a type of piety.⁹²

Two special factors are important in understanding Lütgert's position. First, his view is explicitly indebted to what he sees as an analogy between the situations of Paul and Martin Luther. Both stood between nomists on the one side and antinomists on the other.⁹³ Lütgert uses the terms *Schwärmer* or *Schwarmgeister* or *Enthusiasten* to refer to these libertine Gnostics, and an important part of his case rests on the phrase "not beyond what is written" in 1 Cor 4:6. He takes this to mean that these Gnostics were appealing to special revelations not in Scripture, just like Luther's criticism of his radical opponents on the left.⁹⁴ A second important point is that Lütgert does not lay great stress on "realized eschatology" as a central part of the piety of these pneumatics. Although he does interpret 1 Cor 4:8 as evidence of a Corinthian anticipation of future blessings,⁹⁵ he does not see this as the center of Paul's critique, and he does not interpret the denial of the resurrection in 1 Cor 15 as a problem of realized eschatology.⁹⁶

Lütgert's work met with two sorts of criticisms. First, some scholars were critical of his treatment of 1 Corinthians in the light of 2 Corinthi-

⁸⁹ Lütgert, *Freiheitspredigt*, 7-9 and 86; on page 43 he refers to a few predecessors who held the same view but were ignored.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 90-96 and 99-101.

⁹¹ *Die Vollkommenen im Philipperbrief und die Enthusiasten in Thessalonich* (BFCT 13, vol. 6; Gütersloh; C. Bertelsmann, 1909); *Die Irrlehrer der Pastoralbriefe* (BFCT 13, vol. 3; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1909).

⁹² He makes this clear in *Vollkommenen im Philipperbrief*, 101; see Machalet, "Paulus und seine Gegner," 185.

⁹³ Lütgert, *Freiheitspredigt*, 7-9 and 86.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 117-18.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 128-29. In Lütgert's view the fundamental characteristic of the "Scharmgeister" piety is the dualistic separation of the spirit from the body, as is seen in 1 Cor 15:33ff. On the eschatological dimension of this Gnostic piety see also *Irrlehrer der Pastoralbriefe*, 91-92; and *Vollkommenen im Philipperbrief*, 53-54. In both of these Lütgert states that the Gnostics believed that they had already experienced the resurrection.

ans.⁹⁷ Second, Lütgert had failed to place the pneumatics in a plausible history-of-religions context. Adolf Schlatter, who was closely associated with Lütgert, attempted to improve Lütgert's analysis in both respects.⁹⁸ Schlatter also began from 1 Cor 4:6, but he postulated that the Corinthians had been influenced by Jewish Christians from Palestine who went beyond Scripture in a number of ways.⁹⁹ Schlatter argued that one of these problems was a consciousness of present fulfillment, a perfectionism, which could be seen behind 1 Cor 4:8 and 1 Cor 15.¹⁰⁰ In Schlatter's view the Corinthians still held a future expectation of the parousia, but they believed that only the living would receive the future blessings (so denying the resurrection) and that such future expectation provided no ethical limitations on their present life of fulfillment.¹⁰¹ Thus Schlatter anticipated the later consensus view in many respects, but his specific view of the reason for the Corinthian denial of the resurrection of the dead and his placement of the Corinthian theology in the context of Palestinian Jewish Christianity did not win many followers.¹⁰²

Thus with Lütgert and Schlatter the way was opened to see a relationship between the ethical issues of 1 Corinthians and a pneumatic Corinthian theology, but the role of "realized eschatology" in this theology had not yet been fully explored. Out of the subsequent search for a plausible ideology which would explain all the problems addressed in 1 Corinthians arose a widely-accepted hypothesis about the Corinthian eschatology.¹⁰³ I will describe the growth of this new consensus in seven interlocking steps.

1. The influential study of Karl Barth on 1 Cor 15 raised forcefully for the first time the possibility of one ideology behind all the different problems addressed in 1 Corinthians. Barth argued that the disparate topics taken up in 1 Corinthians are treated by Paul as having an underlying

⁹⁷ See Johannes Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief* (MeyerK, 9th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910), XXXIX.

⁹⁸ Adolf Schlatter, *Die korinthische Theologie* (BFCT 18; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1914).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 35-36.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 28-29, with reference also to Phil 3:11 and 21; 2 Tim 2:18.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 64-65, 73-75, and 82.

¹⁰² A few other works should be mentioned here. Richard Reitzenstein (*Hellenistic Mystery-Religions: Their Basic Ideas and Significance* [PTMS 15; Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1978]) tried to set the Corinthian theology within Hellenistic religiosity and Gnosticism, a thesis which became very influential. Kirsopp Lake (*The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul: Their Motive and Origin* [London: Rivingtons, 1911], 222-32) saw the opponents as Jewish-Christian libertine pneumatics. Mary E. Andrews ("The Party of Christ in Corinth," *ATR* 19 [1937], 17-29) has a view much like that of Lütgert.

¹⁰³ Machalet, "Paulus und seine Gegner," 190.

unity, which is revealed in 1 Cor 15.¹⁰⁴ The denial of the resurrection of the dead is seen by Paul to lie behind all of the church's problems.¹⁰⁵ Barth, however, did not convincingly show how this denial was connected, from the Corinthian perspective, with the other issues. For Barth, the unity lay essentially in Paul's analysis. Bultmann's equally influential reply to Barth's study agreed that the theme of resurrection and eschatology unifies Paul's response to the enthusiasm of the Corinthians, although for Bultmann 1 Cor 13 was the real high point of the letter.¹⁰⁶ From this time on, 1 Corinthians began to be treated as a theological unity, separate from the problems addressed in 2 Corinthians.¹⁰⁷

2. Neither Barth nor Bultmann had gone very far to depict the unity of the Corinthian ideology which Paul opposed. The seminal work of Hans Freiherr von Soden suggested how such a single theological viewpoint could generate the various problems.¹⁰⁸ Beginning from his argument for the literary unity of 1 Cor 8-10 von Soden saw the Corinthian claim to limitless ἐξουσία behind their attitude toward meat offered to idols, the Lord's Supper, the gifts of the Spirit, and the resurrection of the dead. They were Gnostics, "überspannte Enthusiasten des Pneumaglaubens." For them the resurrection had already occurred in the Spirit, and thus they denied the bodily and future character of resurrection.¹⁰⁹ Von Soden's original work did much to lay solid exegetical foundations for the emerging consensus about the eschatological views of the Corinthians.

3. As the work of von Soden made clear, one way of connecting the denial of the resurrection in 1 Cor 15:12 with the rest of the letter was through the hypothesis that the "denial" was really a claim that the decisive resurrection had already occurred for the believers. An article

¹⁰⁴ Karl Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1933; German original, 1925), 5-6.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹⁰⁶ Rudolf Bultmann, "Karl Barth, 'Die Auferstehung der Toten,' " in *Glauben und Verstehen: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1961), 38-40, 46, and 51.

¹⁰⁷ Part of the current consensus is that new developments in Corinth happened between the writing of 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians, so that at most there is an indirect relationship between the two letters. See Käsemann, "Legitimität des Apostels," 36-41; Georgi, *Die Gegner des Paulus*, 13 and 301-303; Machalet, "Paulus und seine Gegner," 195.

¹⁰⁸ Hans Freiherr von Soden, "Sakrament und Ethik bei Paulus: Zur Frage der literarischen und theologischen Einheitlichkeit von 1 Kor. 8-10," in *Marburger Theologische Studien: Rudolf Otto-Festgruss*, vol. 1 (ed. Heinrich Frick; Gotha: Leopold Klotz, 1931), 1-40.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 23. Von Soden ironically notes that Barth's existential interpretation of eschatology in 1 Cor 15 is similar to the position of the Corinthians whom Paul opposes!

by Julius Schniewind proved to be most influential in putting this thesis on more solid exegetical ground.¹¹⁰ Schniewind argued for the thesis that the Corinthians held that the resurrection had already occurred on essentially four grounds: (1) later Gnostic sources teach a resurrection realized already in the present; (2) such a Gnostic belief is attacked in 2 Tim 2:17-18; (3) the link between the Gnostic teaching attacked in 2 Tim 2:17-18 and the Corinthian position is the use of $\eta\delta\eta$ in both 1 Cor 4:8 and in 2 Tim 2:18; (4) Paul's argument in 1 Cor 15:20-28 and 46 makes sense only if we see that he is setting out an order of events which culminates in the future as a polemic against those who deny such a future fulfillment. Although many scholars have accepted a similar view of 1 Cor 15, no other essential arguments have been adduced to support it. Yet two weaknesses in Schniewind's analysis are painfully obvious. First, his appeal to 1 Cor 4:8, 2 Tim 2:17-18, and later Gnostic texts is on shaky ground historically and methodologically. Second, he cannot on this hypothesis account for most of the rest of the argument of 1 Cor 15, especially vv. 12-19, 29-34, and 35-49.¹¹¹ I will return to this problem later. Schniewind's view of the problem behind 1 Cor 15 has been accepted by a great number of scholars.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Julius Schniewind, "Die Leugner der Auferstehung in Korinth," in *Nachgelassene Reden und Aufsätze* (ed. Ernst Kähler; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1952), 110-39.

¹¹¹ See Bernhard Spörlein, *Die Leugnung der Auferstehung: Eine historisch-kritische Untersuchung zu 1 Kor 15* (Biblische Untersuchungen 7; Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1971), 14-15.

¹¹² In German speaking scholarship: Karl-Adolf Bauer, *Leiblichkeit: Des Ende aller Werke Gottes: Die Bedeutung der Leiblichkeit des Menschen bei Paulus* (SNT 4; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1971), 90; Jürgen Becker, *Auferstehung der Toten im Urchristentum* (SBS 82; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1976), 74-76; Günther Bornkamm, *Paul* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 73 and 223; Egon Brandenburger, *Adam und Christus: Exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Römer 5, 12-21 (1. Kor. 15)* (WMANT 7; Neukirchen: Erziehungsvereins, 1962), 70-71; Michael Bünker, *Briefformular und rhetorische Disposition in 1. Korintherbrief* (Göttinger Theologische Arbeiten 28; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 72; Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 1.169; Helmut Koester, "Häretiker im Urchristentum," *RGG*, 3rd ed, vol. 3, column 19; Werner Georg Kümmel, in his supplement to Hans Lietzmann, *An die Korinther I. II* (HNT 9; 5th ed; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1969), 192; Willi Marxsen, *Introduction to the New Testament: An Approach to its Problems* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 75; Heinrich Schlier, "Über das Hauptanliegen des 1. Briefes an die Korinther," in *Die Zeit der Kirche: Exegetische Aufsätze und Vorträge* (Freiburg: Herder, 1956), 149; Hans-Alwin Wilcke, *Das Problem eines messianischen Zwischenreichs bei Paulus* (ATANT 51; Zürich: Zwingli, 1967), 60-61; Heinz-Dietrich Wendland, *Die Briefe an die Korinther* (NTD 7; 12th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), 139-40 and 145. In English speaking scholarship: J. C. K. Freeborn, "The Eschatology of 1 Corinthians 15," in *Studia Evangelica*, vol. II: *Papers presented to the Second International Congress on New Testament Studies held at Christ Church, Oxford, 1961*. Part I: *The New Testament Scriptures* (ed. F. L. Cross; TU 87; Berlin: Akademie, 1964), 559; Wilson, "The Corinthians Who Say," 95-97; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York & Evanston: Harper & Row, 1968; William Dykstra, "1 Corinthians 15:20-28,

4. It has already been seen that such a "realized eschatology" of the Corinthians would need a supporting ideology in the history of religions. Many (but not all) supporters of the "realized eschatology" hypothesis have seen the Corinthians as Gnostics or at least proto-Gnostics whose theology has no need for a future hope. The two most sustained interpretations of 1 Corinthians in the light of Gnosticism are the studies of Schmithals and Wilckens.¹¹³ Schmithals sees only one opposing group behind 1 and 2 Corinthians, identical with the "Christ party" of 1 Cor 1:12.¹¹⁴ Because of the Gnostic myth these Corinthians hold a spiritualistic conception of the future, denying the resurrection of the body.¹¹⁵ Paul misunderstands them when he attributes to them complete hopelessness for the future. On 1 Cor 4:7-8 Schmithals stresses that ἡδὴ expresses the Gnostic self-consciousness of confidence over against the non-pneumatics; he does not regard their claim to perfection as resulting from an eschatological consciousness.¹¹⁶ Quite different is the view of Wilckens, who argues on the basis of 1 Cor 4:8 that the Corinthian Gnostics believe that they already have a place in the upper world, have received all promised eschatological gifts, and have left all judgment behind.¹¹⁷ Thus, although the hypothesis of Gnosticism can be used to support a "realized eschatology" view of the Corinthian theology, there is no necessary connection between them.

an Essential Part of Paul's Argument against Those who Deny the Resurrection," *Calvin Theological Journal* 4 (1969), 206 and 211; James M. Robinson, "Kerygma and History in the New Testament," in *Trajectories through Early Christianity* (ed. James M. Robinson and Helmut Koester; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 32-34; Karl A. Plank, "Resurrection Theology: The Corinthian Controversy Reexamined," in *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 8 (1981), 46 and 50; Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 156-57; Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 121; Ralph P. Martin, *The Spirit and the Congregation: Studies in 1 Corinthians 12-15* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), V-VI, 94, and 109-110.

¹¹³ Walter Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth: An Investigation of the Letters to the Corinthians* (Nashville & New York: Abingdon, 1971); Ulrich Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit: Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu 1. Kor. 1 und 2* (BHT 26; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1959). Some other scholars who refer to the Corinthian opponents as Gnostics are Erich Dinkler, "Korintherbriefe," *RGG*, 3rd ed.; vol. 4, columns 18 and 20; John Painter, "Paul and the πνευματικοί at Corinth," in *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C. K. Barrett* (ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson; London: SPCK, 1982), 237-50; Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 301; Marxsen, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 72-75; Werner Georg Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975), 274-75. For a good overview of the history of the Gnostic hypothesis see Erich Fascher, *Der Erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, vol. 1 (THKNT; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1975), 54-64.

¹¹⁴ Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, 114 and 199-206.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* 156-58. Schmithals is hesitant to ascribe a view such as that in 2 Tim 2:17-18 to them. In his view the basis for their rejection of the resurrection is rather the Gnostic dualism of flesh and soul.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 180-81.

¹¹⁷ Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 17 and 97.

5. Most scholars who hold that a "realized eschatology" is a major source of the Corinthian problems call on 1 Cor 4:8 for support, but compared to other aspects of 1 Corinthians this verse has enjoyed relatively little study. Most refer to it as if its interpretation is self-evident.¹¹⁸ The strongest argument in favor of the "realized eschatology" view of 1 Cor 4:8 is provided by James Robinson. He takes both 15:12 and 4:8 as the views of a "turgid fanaticism of those who have already risen and are living it up in glory."¹¹⁹ The Corinthian opponents saw in their baptism not only their union with Christ but also their attainment of the final consummation already in the present. Robinson traces a "trajectory" of this view: the Corinthians in 4:8 have misused the beatitudes of the synoptic Q source (see especially Luke 6:24-25); this is confirmed by the claim to reign in the present in the *Gospel of Thomas 2* and the end of *Thomas the Contender*.¹²⁰ The Corinthian view of baptismal fulfillment is confirmed by the deutero-Pauline statements in Col 2:12-13 and Eph 2:5-6. Their view on resurrection is confirmed by 2 Tim 2:18 and the Gnostic *Treatise on Resurrection*.¹²¹ With this interpretation Robinson can not only speak for the majority of scholars in seeing this attitude as the impetus for all the Corinthian problems in the first letter, but he can also set the Corinthian theology within a theory of the development of Christian Gnosticism from Q to Nag Hammadi.

6. No one has done more to clarify and propagate the "realized eschatology" view of 1 Corinthians than Ernst Käsemann. As I have already shown, Käsemann does this in the context of his view of the importance of apocalyptic eschatology in the development of Christian theology. Käsemann actually contributes little that is new to the question of the Corinthian position. They are, in his view, pneumatics, *Schwärmer*,¹²² hellenistic enthusiasts, for whom "the end of history has already arrived."¹²³ For them "everything which apocalyptic still hopes for has already been realized."¹²⁴ They have no "theologically relevant future hope."¹²⁵ Käsemann, however, gives little exegetical grounding for his views, mentions mostly 1 Cor 15:20-28 and the Corinthian view

¹¹⁸ Wendland, *Die Briefe an die Korinther*, 16 and 39-40; Bornkamm, *Paul*, 160; F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1971), 20-21 and 49; Becker, *Auferstehung der Toten*, 61-62; Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2 (Hermeneia, Foundations and Facets; Philadelphia: Fortress; Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1982), 122.

¹¹⁹ Robinson, "Kerygma and History," 33-34.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 43-44.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 33-36.

¹²² Käsemann, "Legitimität des Apostels," 41.

¹²³ Käsemann, "Beginnings of Christian Theology," 106.

¹²⁴ Käsemann, "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," 131.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 125.

of the gifts of the Spirit, does not explicitly refer to 1 Cor 4:8, and calls on the realized interpretation of baptism in Eph 2:5 and Col 2:12-13 and of resurrection in 2 Tim 2:18. Käsemann's more significant contribution, which is to be seen in the context of his theological critique of Bultmann, is his statement that ". . .the anti-enthusiastic battle waged by the apostle is fought under the sign of apocalyptic."¹²⁶ Thus Paul is not, as Bultmann would have it, a representative of hellenistic enthusiasm, but its opponent. Paul's future eschatology is not an insignificant relic but an essential part of his theological armory. So Käsemann coins the well-known phrase "eschatological reservation" (*Vorbehalt*), which he uses with reference mainly to Rom 6:4-5 and 1 Cor 15:20-28.¹²⁷ So by implication the whole tenor of Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians is characterized by this use of apocalyptic eschatology to criticize and delimit the Corinthian eschatological enthusiasm.

7. So a consensus has been forged. This consensus view has been defended most notably in an article by Anthony C. Thiselton.¹²⁸ He begins by admitting that the "realized eschatology" view of the reason for the denial of the resurrection in 1 Cor 15:12 is not certain and that 1 Cor 4:8 by itself cannot unambiguously support the thesis of a Corinthian rejection of future eschatology. Yet this eschatological thesis, in Thiselton's view, is confirmed by the fact that it can explain all the other Corinthian problems as well. An over-realized eschatology is not the necessary cause of each problem, but it is a sufficient cause to explain them all.¹²⁹ Thiselton then takes the issues addressed in 1 Corinthians one by one and shows how an over-realized eschatology, which led to an "enthusiastic" experience of the Spirit, underlies all of the problems. Further, he argues that in each case it is Paul's future eschatology which serves as his main weapon against the over-realized eschatology and Spirit-enthusiasm.¹³⁰ Thus the impulse which Karl Barth set in motion has come to full fruition. The letter of 1 Corinthians, in spite of its disparate topics, is a unified theological treatise which offers apocalyp-

¹²⁶ Ibid., 132.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 132-134.

¹²⁸ Anthony C. Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," *NTS* 24 (1977-78), 510-26.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 510-512.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 523.

tic eschatology as the antidote to the multi-faceted Corinthian over-realized eschatology.¹³¹

Some initial observations can be drawn from this survey of the rise of the "realized eschatology" consensus: (1) This view has both influenced and been influenced by the theological debate about present and future eschatology in Paul's theology. (2) The only texts which are usually appealed to are 1 Cor 4:8 and 15:20-28. (3) Another mainstay of the consensus has been a kind of "negative image" methodology, whereby Paul's emphasis on future eschatology is taken to be a polemical device against the Corinthian present eschatology. (4) In the final analysis, as Thiselton's article makes explicit, it is the heuristic usefulness of the "realized eschatology" thesis for making some consistent sense of all the various issues addressed in 1 Corinthians which has made it popular. Anyone who wishes to criticize the consensus view will have to keep this factor in mind.

Note On the Use of the Word "Enthusiasm"

Recent discussions of the situation behind 1 Corinthians have been plagued, in my opinion, by excessive and unclear use of the German words "*Enthusiasmus*" and "*Enthusiast*" and the English cognates.¹³² The usage with reference to Pauline opponents seems to go back to Lütgert, who uses the terms as equivalents to *Schwarmgeister* or *Schwärm-*

¹³¹ Other examples of this consensus view are: Karl Heim, *Die Gemeinde des Auferstandenen: Tübinger Vorlesungen über den 1. Korintherbrief* (ed. Friso Melzer; München: Neubau, 1949), 53, 57, and 221; Horst Balz, *Christus in Korinth: Eine Einführung in den ersten Korintherbrief* (Kassel: J. G. Oncken, 1970), 48, 118-19, and 125; Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2, 122 and 124; Martin, *The Spirit and the Congregation*, V-VI; Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 121, 155, and 178-79; Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 164-66 and 280; Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (The New International Critical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 12.

¹³² On the religious use of the term see R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion, with special reference to the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950); Umphrey Lee, *The Historical Backgrounds of Early Methodist Enthusiasm* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931); Ludwig Rademacher, "Enthusiasm," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (ed. James Hastings), vol. 5, 316-17; Hans Siegert, "Enthusiasmus," in *Griechisches in der Kirchensprache: Ein Sprach- und Kulturgeschichtliche Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1950), 67; Karl Gerhard Steck, *Luther und die Schwärmer* (Theologische Studien 44; Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1955); W. Trillhaas, "Enthusiasmus," *RGG*, 3rd ed., vol. 2, columns 495-96; Susie I. Tucker, *Enthusiasm: A Study in Semantic Change* (Cambridge: University Press, 1972); W. T. Whitley, "Enthusiasts," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (ed. James Hastings), vol. 5, 317-21.

erei.¹³³ As I pointed out above, Lütgert draws an analogy between the Corinthian enthusiasts and the radical reformers who were castigated as *Schwarmgeister* by Luther.¹³⁴ Käsemann uses *Enthusiasten* to refer to two types of theology: one is "post-Easter enthusiasm," which includes a fervent expectation of an imminent parousia; the other is "hellenistic enthusiasm," which has a realized eschatology.¹³⁵ As Ebeling rightly complains, in view of the negative and specific connotations usually associated with the word, Käsemann introduces unnecessary confusion by using it as he does.¹³⁶ It is scarcely necessary to list the numerous scholars who use "enthusiasm" either in German or English to refer to the Corinthian theology.¹³⁷ But "enthusiasm" is a rather technical term in the history of Christian polemics which refers to people who claim an immediate experience of the divine or of the Spirit, for example,

¹³³ Lütgert, *Freiheitspredigt und Volkommenen im Philipperbrief*. See Klaus Berger, "Die impliziten Gegner: Zur Methode des Erschliessens von 'Gegnern' in neutestamentlichen Texten," in *Kirche: Festschrift für Günther Bornkamm zum 75. Geburtstag* (ed. Dieter Lührmann and Georg Strecker, Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1980), 387-88.

¹³⁴ The words "*Schwarmgeister*" and "*Enthusiasten*" seem to have been used interchangeably to refer generally to people who boasted about revelations and spirits and who depended on this immediate experience of the Spirit more than on the Scriptures and sacraments. Included in this category were not only people like Thomas Münzer but also Ulrich Zwingli. Luther himself seems to have preferred (and perhaps coined) the image of swarming excited bees as a reference to such people: "Smalcald Articles," Article 8, #3 (where he does use the word "*Enthusiasten*" in the German); WA, vol. 23, pp. 64-282 (American Edition, vol. 37, pp. 13-150), where he uses "*Schwarmgeister*" against the Zwinglians; WA, vol. 18, pp. 62-214 (American Edition, vol. 40, pp. 79-223), where he uses "*Schwärmer*" against Andreas Karlstadt; WA, vol. 26, pp. 7-8 and 50 (American Edition, vol. 28, pp. 221-222 and 282), on 1 Tim 1:4 and 3:1, "Large Catechism," #12, 61 and 63, where he uses "*Schwärmer*." Melancthon in the "Apology of the Augsburg Confession," Article 13, uses in the Latin text the Greek word ἐνθουσιασμός. See also the "Formula of Concord," Epitome, Article 2, #13, 46, and 80; Solid Declaration, Article 2, #4; and Article 7, #22, 102, and 103, where one finds mostly "*Enthusiasten*" in the German, "*Enthusiastae*" in the Latin, but also occasionally "*Schwärmern*" or "*fanaticis*" in the Latin.

¹³⁵ Käsemann, "Beginnings of Christian Theology," 92 and 105-106; "On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," 114, 127, and 130-31. On this aspect of Käsemann's views see Ehler, *Die Herrschaft des Gekreuzigten*, 294. James D. G. Dunn (*Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry Into the Character of Earliest Christianity* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977], 176-79, 309, 328, and 337) distinguishes apocalyptic enthusiasm from gnostic enthusiasm, following Käsemann.

¹³⁶ Ebeling, "Ground of Christian Theology," 51-52, 54-57. On Käsemann's use of the term see also Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypik*, 22-27, 198-99; Leander E. Keck, *Paul and His Letters* (Proclamation Commentaries; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 22-23; Berger, "Die impliziten Gegner," 387-88.

¹³⁷ See, for example, Wendland, *Die Briefe an die Korinther*, 3; Dieter Georgi, "Corinthians, First Letter to the," *IDBSup*, 182. Baumgarten (*Paulus und die Apokalypik*, 198-226 and especially 198-200) complains about the confusion in the use of the term engendered by Käsemann, but he nevertheless uses the term frequently to refer to the Corinthians.

Montanists, Joachim of Fiore, Quakers, and Shakers.¹³⁸ The word thus may well describe the sort of behavior implied in 1 Cor 12-14.¹³⁹ But the word does not usually imply a weakened sense of future expectation, in fact often quite the contrary. Add to this the problem of the more general sense which the word "enthusiasm" usually carries in English (and in modern German),¹⁴⁰ and one gets the impression that many who now use the term with reference to the Corinthians do not have a clear conception of what they mean by it. It would be hopeless at this point to call for scholars to stop using "enthusiasm," but it would serve the interests of clarity to have those who use the word define it and limit it to the claim of the experience of the Spirit. In any case, it should be made clear that "enthusiasm" by itself does not include an over-realized eschatology.

Criticisms of the "Realized Eschatology" Hypothesis

The "realized eschatology" dominant view has not, however, gone unchallenged. In fact, every pillar of support has been called into question. The most controversial point is the interpretation of the Corinthian denial of the resurrection of the dead in 1 Cor 15. It is apparent that 1 Cor 15:12 gives neither a reason for their denial nor a clue to whatever belief they did hold about the dead. Their position can only be inferred indirectly from Paul's argument. Here is an enticing invitation to scholarly endeavor, and the number of opinions is almost as great as the items in the massive bibliography on 1 Cor 15. But for all practical purposes recent opinions break down into two main types: the eschatological, which I have treated above, and the anthropological,¹⁴¹ i.e., the view that the soul alone will continue to exist in immortality while the

¹³⁸ Ebeling, "Ground of Christian Theology," 54-57; Lee, *Historical Backgrounds*, 13-37; Knox, *Enthusiasm*, 1-8; on pp. 9ff. he does include the Corinthians, but not on the basis of realized eschatology.

¹³⁹ See Gottlob Schrenk, "Geist und Enthusiasmus: Eine Erläuterung zur paulinischen Theologie," in *Wort und Geist: Studien zur christlichen Erkenntnis von Gott, Welt und Mensch: Festgabe für Karl Heim zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. Adolf Köberle and Otto Schmitz; Berlin: Furche, 1934), 75-97; he discusses ἐνθουσιασμός in the Greek world.

¹⁴⁰ See especially the full study of the shifting meaning of "enthusiasm" in English usage by Tucker, *Enthusiasm*; also the entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

¹⁴¹ Another view occasionally put forward is that the Corinthians believed that only those alive at the parousia would enter the kingdom: Schweitzer, *Mysticism*, 93; Spörlein, *Die Leugnung der Auferstehung*, 190-95; William F. Orr and James A. Walther, *1 Corinthians* (AB; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1976), 319; Schlatter, *Die korinthische Theologie*, 28 and 64 (combined with the realized eschatology view); Hans Conzelmann, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 262.

physical body remains in the grave. This latter view, which was once the most popular, has continued to attract a number of supporters. Of course, in the religious climate of hellenism, various specific history-of-religions backgrounds could contribute to such an anthropological dualism—Greek philosophy, popular culture, Gnosticism, or hellenistic Judaism.¹⁴² Inevitably, most scholars who hold some version of this position look to the discussion in 15:35-58 for support. I will outline my own interpretation of 1 Cor 15 in an appendix. It is enough here to emphasize that the eschatological interpretation of 1 Cor 15, either from the aspect of the Corinthian denial or from the aspect of Paul's response, is neither self-evident from the text nor solidly supported by a vast majority of scholars. Of particular importance is the recent work by Horsley, Sandelin, Pearson, and Sellin, all of whom posit hellenistic Judaism as the background of 1 Cor 15.

Nor has the "realized eschatology" interpretation of 1 Cor 4:8 gone without criticism. Richard Horsley, for example, notes that ἡδὴ is not

¹⁴² Following are some of the scholars who favor anthropological dualism as the occasion for the denial of the resurrection in Corinth. (1) Those who see a background of Greek philosophical or popular thought: C. F. Georg Heinrich, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* (MeyerK; 8th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1896), 439-41; Lietzmann, *An die Korinther*; 79; Wilhelm Bousset, "Der erste Brief an die Korinther," in *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (ed. J. Weiss, W. Bousset, W. Heitmüller; 3rd ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917), vol. 2, 155; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 343-45; Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (ICC; 2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914), 328-29; Ernest-Bernard Allo, *Saint Paul: première épître aux Corinthiens* (2nd ed.; Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1956), 387 and 399; F. W. Grosheide, *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 356; Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 303-304; Murdoch E. Dahl, *The Resurrection of the Body: A Study of 1 Corinthians 15* (SBT 36; Naperville, Illinois: Alec R. Allenson, 1962), 24-25; E. Earle Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity: New Testament Essays* (WUNT 18; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1978), 77; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *1 Corinthians* (New Testament Message; Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1979), 137. (2) Those who see a background of Gnosticism: Luise Schottroff, *Der Glaubende und die feindliche Welt: Beobachtungen zum gnostischen Dualismus und seiner Bedeutung für Paulus und des Johannesevangelium* (WMANT 37; Neukirchen: Erziehungsvereins, 1970), 154-56, 161-62, and 166; Paul Hoffmann, *Die Toten in Christus: Eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung zur paulinischen Eschatologie* (NTAbh, n.s. 2; Münster: Aschendorff, 1966), 241-43; Günter Kegel, *Auferstehung Jesus-Auferstehung der Toten: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Neuen Testament* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1970), 42-45. (3) Those who see a hellenistic Jewish background: Birger A. Pearson, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians: A Study in the Theology of the Corinthian Opponents of Paul and its Relation to Gnosticism* (SBLDS 12; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1973), 15-17; Richard A. Horsley, "'How Can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?' Spiritual Elitism in Corinth," *NovT* 20 (1978), 225; Karl-Gustav Sandelin, *Die Auseinandersetzung mit der Weisheit in 1. Korinther 15* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1976), 10, 147, and 149-53; Gerhard Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten: Eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung von 1 Korinther 15* (FRLANT 138; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 30, 36-37.

necessarily part of their view but may only be Paul's own ironic formulation.¹⁴³ E. Earle Ellis objects to the eschatological interpretation of 4:8 on the basis of the fact that such boasting as mentioned in 4:7-8 would be just as wrong after the parousia as before.¹⁴⁴ Peter Marshall in his dissertation and subsequent article has analyzed 4:7-8 in terms of the Greek theme of *hybris* and suggests that the arrogant Corinthian behavior is a problem stemming from an abuse of social status and privilege by some in Corinth.¹⁴⁵

There have also been a few studies which have attacked the "realized eschatology" hypothesis more broadly. Darrell Doughty criticizes Käsemann and others for interpreting 1 Corinthians as a speculative debate about the presence or future of salvation; the real issue is the Corinthian misunderstanding of salvation as such, whether present or future. With reference both to 1 Cor 4:8 and chapter 15 Doughty sees Paul's "reservation" as based not on eschatology but on Christology.¹⁴⁶ Doughty offers some telling observations, but he does not give very deep exegetical grounding to his arguments, and he does not explain adequately why Paul does use so much future eschatology in 1 Corinthians.

An article by A. J. M. Wedderburn on the denial of the resurrection in Corinth notes that 1 Cor 4:8 is a weak support for the hypothesis that realized eschatology is the reason for the denial of the resurrection.¹⁴⁷ He sees hellenistic popular philosophical beliefs behind 4:8, 6:13, and chapter 15, and he sees the underlying problem as a body-soul duality, not a realized eschatology. Wedderburn accumulates much enlightening background material from Greek sources for the interpretation of these verses, but ultimately he also does not give a satisfactory answer to the question of the function of Paul's apocalyptic eschatology in 1 Corinthians.

Although by no means all scholars who hold the "realized eschatology" hypothesis connect their view with Gnosticism (Käsemann himself was a major exception), it is still true that the thesis was made credible by the obvious emphasis on present fulfillment in later Gnostic sources (see the work of Robinson and Schniewind, for example). For

¹⁴³ Horsley, " 'How can some of you say', " 203.

¹⁴⁴ Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, 78-79.

¹⁴⁵ Peter Marshall, "Hybrists Not Gnostics in Corinth," in *SBL Seminar Papers 1984* (ed. Kent Harold Richards; Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1984) 275-87; *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians* (WUNT 2/23; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1987), 206-209.

¹⁴⁶ Darrell J. Doughty, "The Presence and Future of Salvation in Corinth," *ZNW* 66 (1975), 61-90.

¹⁴⁷ A. J. M. Wedderburn, "The Problem of the Denial of the Resurrection in I Corinthians XV," *NovT* 23 (1981), 229-41.

reasons that are largely beyond the scope of this study, the Gnostic nature of the Corinthian theology has increasingly come to be questioned.¹⁴⁸ Not only this, but scholars are also becoming aware that Gnostics themselves did not necessarily reject all future expectation.¹⁴⁹ This recent development means that one cannot any longer confidently call on later Gnostic views to support the "realized eschatology" hypothesis. We are led back to the necessity of re-examining the text of the letter itself.

Finally, a few scholars have pointed out that Paul's "eschatological reservation" need not be seen as a polemical device against an over-realized eschatology. Rather, the recourse to future eschatology is a fundamental reflex of Paul in a variety of contexts.¹⁵⁰ This observation brings us back to the fundamental question of this study: just what is the function of the future eschatological statements of Paul in 1 Corinthians?

Some conclusions from this review of scholarship can now be drawn: (1) The supports for the hypothesis that one source of all the Corinthian problems was their over-realized eschatology are mainly 1 Cor 4:8; the function of apocalyptic eschatology in 1 Corinthians as an "eschatological reservation," particularly in 1 Cor 15:20-28; and the possibility of seeing all issues related to one ideology as a sufficient cause. (2) Significant criticism has been directed against each of these supports. (3) The critiques, as far as eschatology is concerned, have remained isolated. They have not been convincing because they propose no adequate alternative view of the function of apocalyptic eschatology in 1 Corinthi-

¹⁴⁸ Sasagu Arai, "Die Gegner des Paulus im I. Korintherbrief und das Problem der Gnosis," *NTS* 19 (1972-73), 430-37; he counters the Gnostic view of 1 Corinthians with a sociological interpretation, with special reference to 4:8 and chap. 15. Others who question the Gnostic background are: Christian Wolff, *Der Erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther*, vol. 2 (THKNT; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1982), 213-14; R. McL. Wilson, "How Gnostic were the Corinthians?," *NTS* 19 (1972-73), 74; R. McL. Wilson, "Gnosis at Corinth," in *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C. K. Barrett* (ed. M. D. Hooker and S. G. Wilson; London: SPCK, 1982), 112; Pearson, *Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology*, 82; Richard A. Horsley, "PNEUMATIKOS vs. PSYCHIKOS: Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians," *HTR* 69 (1976), 269-88; Erich Fascher, "Die Korintherbriefe und die Gnosis," in *Gnosis und Neues Testament: Studien aus Religionswissenschaft und Theologie* (ed. Karl-Wolfgang Tröger; Berlin: Evangelische Verlag; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1973), 54-64; Conzelmann, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 14-15; Ulrich Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16," in *Theologie Crucis-Signum Crucis: Festschrift für Erich Dinkler zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. Carl Andresen and Günter Klein; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1979), 501-37. In this article Wilckens reverses himself from his earlier study *Weisheit und Torheit*.

¹⁴⁹ Malcolm L. Peel, "Gnostic Eschatology and the New Testament," *NovT* 12 (1970), 155-62; George MacRae, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Gnosticism," in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, 317-25.

¹⁵⁰ Conzelmann, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 268, note 44, calling attention especially to the non-polemical use of the "reservation" in Rom 6; see also Luz, *Geschichtsverständnis*, 309.

ans. (4) Seeing the issue only in terms of a doctrinal controversy between Paul and the Corinthians leads to a one-sided view of how apocalyptic eschatology functions. It is simply mistaken to think that future eschatology can only function as a tool in theological polemics. (5) I suggest that the "realized eschatology" hypothesis is a scholarly paradigm which is ripe for re-examination. I hope to demonstrate that the foundation for a new view of the function of future eschatology in 1 Corinthians can be built on a close examination of Paul's judgment language in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5.

4. Exegetical Approaches to Apocalyptic Eschatology

The revival of interest in the role of apocalypticism in the origins of Christianity has produced a plethora of attempts to define "apocalyptic" and appropriate methods for studying it. A precondition for finding a sure direction through this methodological discussion is a clear statement of the question to be addressed in this study: How does Paul in 1 Corinthians make use of apocalyptic language in his interaction with the people of the Corinthian congregation in order to build a persuasive argument aimed at bringing about the desired change in the situation? The elements of this question can serve to identify four points of methodological concern.

First, no one can use the word "apocalyptic" and its cognates today without specifying the reference of these terms. I follow a number of recent scholars who find the terminology suggested by Paul Hanson to be the clearest and least open to misunderstanding. In this three-fold delineation "apocalypse" refers to a literary genre, "apocalyptic eschatology" refers to "a religious perspective, a way of viewing divine plans in relation to mundane realities," and "apocalypticism" refers to a socio-religious movement with a particular ideology.¹⁵¹ This means for my study that the genre "apocalypse" and all the thorny issues related to it can be left aside, since no one could call any Pauline letter an apocalypse. This study will be mostly concerned with apocalyptic eschatology, since, in Hanson's definition, this refers to a set of ideas and motifs which can be incorporated in a variety of literary genres and social settings and can be combined with other perspectives. Thus "apocalyptic eschatology" is a relatively neutral descriptive term. "Apocalypticism" is the most difficult to identify historically, and I can leave open the question of whether or not Pauline Christianity can be so labeled.

¹⁵¹ Paul D. Hanson, "Apocalypticism," *IDBSup*, 28-30.

My starting point, then, is the analysis of apocalyptic eschatology, which already assumes that the basic characteristic of such language is its future orientation.¹⁵² To be sure, other sorts of symbolic language can be found in apocalypses, a fact which makes any definition of this genre problematic.¹⁵³ Most useful is the identification by Wayne Meeks of three dualities which are characteristic of the "apocalyptic universe":

(a) the cosmic duality heaven/earth, (b) the temporal duality this age/ the age to come, and (c) a social duality: the sons of light/the sons of darkness, the righteous/the unrighteous, the elect/the world.¹⁵⁴

Leander Keck accepts these three and suggests a fourth, epistemological dualism, since the foundational apocalyptic view is that revelation imparts privileged information.¹⁵⁵ The cosmic duality of heaven and earth has been the subject of some recent studies which demonstrate the importance of this duality in apocalyptic thinking,¹⁵⁶ but in Paul, at least, such spatial dualism seems to be complementary and subordinate to the duality of present and future. In any case, spatial dualism plays a minor role in 1 Corinthians.¹⁵⁷ The social duality reflected in apocalyptic texts cannot be separated from the other dualities, especially the temporal, which generates such a social response. The proposed fourth duality of divine and human knowledge calls for some comment because it will be important for this study. It must be stressed, however, that this duality cuts two ways. On the one hand it is certainly a *sine qua non* for apocalyptic thought that God has revealed his plans to humans in some

¹⁵² The term "eschatology" can no longer be used by itself, because it has come to refer also to the decisive present moment of salvation.

¹⁵³ See the well-known lists of characteristics given by D. S. Russell (*The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic 200 B.C.-A.D. 100* [OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964], 106ff.), Paul Vielhauer ("Apocalypses and Related Subjects: Introduction," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2 [ed. Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965], 582-94), and Klaus Koch (*The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic* [SBT, 2nd series 22; Naperville, Illinois: Alec R. Allenson, 1972], 24-33). A better approach is that taken in *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (ed. John J. Collins; Semeia 14 [1979]).

¹⁵⁴ Meeks, "Social Functions of Apocalyptic Language," 689.

¹⁵⁵ Leander E. Keck, "Paul and Apocalyptic Theology," *Int* 38 (1984), 234-35.

¹⁵⁶ Christopher Rowland (*The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* [New York: Crossroad, 1982]) stresses the importance of cosmic dualism rather than future eschatology. Lincoln (*Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension in Paul's Thought with Special Reference to His Eschatology* [SNTSMS 43; Cambridge: University Press, 1981], 172-73) links the spatial element of heaven to Paul's view that the new age has already begun in Christ.

¹⁵⁷ It is more prominent in, e.g., Phil 3:19-20.

special way.¹⁵⁸ On the other hand an essential aspect of future apocalyptic expectation is often that God will reveal the secrets of his plans and the hidden things of human hearts only at the end.¹⁵⁹ Thus here, too, the more fundamental duality is still temporal. So I am justified in setting aside all the other definitional problems and stating simply that I will be concerned in this study with Paul's statements about the supra-historical future action of God, i.e., with his apocalyptic eschatology.¹⁶⁰

A second methodological concern arises from the attempt to interpret the apocalyptic eschatology in the text as part of Paul's interaction with the actual situation in the Corinthian congregation. Here it becomes apparent why isolating the phenomenon of "apocalyptic eschatology" is useful, even though this is not a category that Paul would have recognized, and it runs the risk of arbitrarily breaking up conceptions which formed a unity for Paul. Nevertheless, isolating apocalyptic eschatology enables us to compare its use in Paul with its use in other socio-religious contexts. This opens up the possibility of using not only texts from the ancient milieu of early Christianity but also data from a wide variety of religious movements up to the present day. A broad tradition of sociology and social anthropology associated with Emile Durkheim has attempted to see in a positive light the ways in which religious beliefs, language, and rituals function within human social structures.¹⁶¹ More specifically, much field research and theoretical analysis have been devoted to the particular kind of religious movement characterized, above all, by the strong expectation of imminent transforma-

¹⁵⁸ Martin Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), vol. 1, 250; J. Louis Martyn, "Epistemology at the Turn of the Ages, 2 Corinthians 5:16," in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox* (ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, and R. R. Niebuhr; Cambridge: University Press, 1967), 269-87.

¹⁵⁹ On this aspect of apocalyptic expectation see Joel Marcus, "Mark 4:10-12 and Marcan Epistemology," *JBL* 103 (1984), 557-74.

¹⁶⁰ Baumgarten (*Paulus und die Apokalypik*, 16, 18, and 21) also chooses to equate "Apokalypik" with future eschatology. So also basically Käsemann ("On the Subject of Primitive Christian Apocalyptic," 109) and Beker (*Paul the Apostle*, new preface, XIV).

¹⁶¹ See Lucy Mair, *An Introduction to Social Anthropology* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 34; also Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Sociological Perspective* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 32-36. One needs to distinguish "manifest" from "latent" functions of religion; the manifest function is one which is intended; a latent function is that which can be seen only by outside reflection. See Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (1968 Enlarged Edition; New York: Free Press; London: Collier Macmillan, 1968), 105.

tion.¹⁶² The real justification for using this material must be demonstrated in actual practice, but one has to be clear from the outset about what this material can and cannot do for the NT exegete. Neither the best anthropological theory nor historical integrity will seek a reductionist explanation which sees social needs as the sole cause for the origin of future expectations.¹⁶³ Nor should a scholar treat the future expectations of a movement as if this aspect by itself tells the whole story of the group's motivations and behavior. All religious movements are too complex to be fitted into a one-dimensional model. But if such religious analogies and the variety of theoretical perspectives on millenarian movements are used to complement one's primary attention to the historical text rather than fitting the text into a preconceived theory,¹⁶⁴ then the interpreter can be guided into seeing the rich ways in which symbolic language, individual cognition, and social behavior are interrelated.¹⁶⁵ In other words, at the very least, keeping an eye on the work of social anthropologists on millenarian movements will remind the NT interpreter to ask not only about the content of the future expectations but also about how these worked within the human context.

In order to assess the function of apocalyptic eschatology in a particular social and religious context a third point to keep in mind is the way in which the argument of the text works to persuade the readers. Future eschatological statements are part of the rhetorical strategy of the author. George Kennedy's statement is helpful: "The ultimate goal of rhetorical analysis, briefly put, is the discovery of the author's intent and of how that is transmitted through a text to an audience."¹⁶⁶ This approach stresses the first of the five traditional parts of rhetoric,

¹⁶² Some of the more important works are: Kenelm Burridge, *New Heaven, New Earth: A Study of Millenarian Activities* (New York: Schocken, 1969); Yonina Talmon, "Pursuit of the Millenium: The Relation between Religious and Social Change," *Archives européennes de sociologie* 3 (1962), 125-48; Sylvia Thrupp (ed.), *Millenial Dreams in Action: Essays in Comparative Study* (The Hague: Mouton, 1962); Peter Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of 'Cargo' Cults in Melanesia* (2nd ed.; New York: Schocken, 1968). Further bibliography in Weston LaBarre, "Materials for a History of Studies of Crisis Cults: A Bibliographic Essay," *Current Anthropology* 12 (1971), 3-44. The best discussion of the use of this material in NT study is Meeks, "Social Functions of Apocalyptic Language."

¹⁶³ Beker (*Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel*, 90-95) concedes the aptness of analogies between Christian apocalyptic eschatology and other millenarian movements, but he finally rules out a social scientific approach from a theological point of view.

¹⁶⁴ See the comments by John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1984), 29.

¹⁶⁵ Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 125.

¹⁶⁶ George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 12.

"invention," i.e., the treatment of the subject matter which is intended to prove or persuade.¹⁶⁷ Kennedy suggests three aspects of analyzing the rhetoric of a text: (1) determining the rhetorical unit by seeking signs of opening and closure; (2) defining the rhetorical situation, i.e., the conditions of audience and author which have called forth the utterance; (3) considering the persuasive effect of the arrangement of the material, i.e., a detailed exposition of the assumptions, formal features, and logical progression of the text.¹⁶⁸ Thus not only is the text itself to be considered as the means of rhetorical address, but the recipients and author also must be questioned.¹⁶⁹ In this study, accordingly, I will ask three sorts of questions: (1) Given the specific situation in Corinth and the world shared as an assumption by the author and the recipients, how would this text be perceived by them? (2) How does Paul analyze the situation to be addressed and then express his intentions through the text? (3) How do the language and traditions of the text work together to form a unique rhetorical argument?

If the goal of rhetoric is to effect a change of behavior,¹⁷⁰ then a fourth area of interest is the relation between human thought and patterns of behavior, between intellectual and social phenomena.¹⁷¹ The consequence for this study is that we must probe more deeply into the symbolic function of apocalyptic language, especially future judgment language in our text, more deeply than the customary reference to judgment as a threat, a big stick, to prod people to self-interested moral obedience.¹⁷² Fortunately, some recent perspectives on religion have stressed the distinctive intellectual function of religious symbols in human social

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 3.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 33-38.

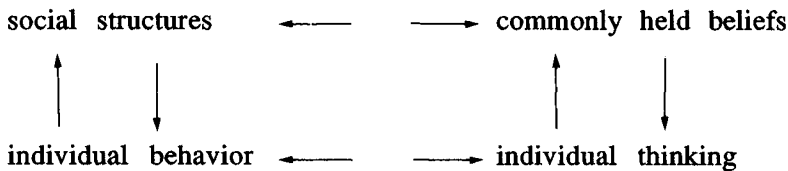
¹⁶⁹ This three-level model is widely referred to as "communication theory"; see R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Hermeneia, New Testament Foundations and Facets; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 6; Culpepper draws on Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1978), 267. See also Hans-Josef Klauck, *Herrenmahl und hellenistischer Kult: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum ersten Korintherbrief* (NTAbh 15; Münster: Aschendorff, 1982), 4. But Wayne Thompson ("Communication, Communication Theory, and Rhetoric," in *Language Behavior: A Book of Readings in Communication* [ed. Johnnye Akin et al.; Janua Linguarum, Series Maior 41; The Hague & Paris: Mouton, 1970], 78-94) cautions that communication theory as it has usually been conceived is concerned more with factual accuracy and the process of communication and feedback in any kind of media, whereas concern with the effectiveness and ethical consequences of verbal discourse is more properly called "rhetoric".

¹⁷⁰ See Klaus Berger, *Exegese des Neuen Testaments: Neue Wege vom Text zur Auslegung* (Uni-Taschenbücher 658; Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1977), 88-89.

¹⁷¹ Klaus Berger, "Wissenssoziologie und Exegese des Neuen Testaments," *Kairos* 19 (1977), 126.

¹⁷² For example, Heinz-Dietrich Wendland, "Ethik und Eschatologie in der Theologie des Paulus," *NKZ* 41 (1930), 769.

interaction.¹⁷³ Particularly helpful is the broad theoretical area called the "sociology of knowledge," which in the first place seeks to define the ways in which social factors determine patterns of thought, but which also looks at the reverse process--how patterns of thought affect human social behavior.¹⁷⁴ What is to be emphasized here is that social structures and group beliefs both impinge on and are maintained by the thinking and behavior of individuals.¹⁷⁵ The processes involved are circular and complex, but each aspect needs to be considered in relation to the others. Perhaps a diagram will help us to conceptualize these relationships:



This model will be important as I attempt to analyze the way in which the apocalyptic symbols in 1 Corinthians function in the thinking and behavior of individuals to affect social patterns.¹⁷⁶ In the terms of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, we can say that apocalyptic statements function both in human conversation and individual consciousness¹⁷⁷ as a "symbolic universe," which serves to legitimate and maintain on the most comprehensive level the social order of the group and the place of the individual in that order within the world.¹⁷⁸

The following presuppositions for this study can now be drawn from the foregoing methodological discussion. Statements of future eschatology have particular kinds of functions within a religious group, functions which can usefully be compared with those in other groups which adhere to intense future expectations. Since in our case our primary

¹⁷³ Especially the work of Mary Douglas, Victor Turner, and Clifford Geertz; see Robert A. Segal, "The Application of Symbolic Anthropology to Religions of the Greco-Roman World," *RelSRev* 10 (1984), 217-18. See Geertz ("Religion as a Cultural System," 89-90) on the function of sacred symbols and a world view to synthesize a people's ethos.

¹⁷⁴ Talcott Parsons, "An Approach to the Sociology of Knowledge," in *The Sociology of Knowledge: A Reader* (ed. James E. Curtis and John W. Petras; New York & Washington: Praeger, 1970), 301-303. This book is a good introduction to the whole subject.

¹⁷⁵ Curtis and Petras, *The Sociology of Knowledge*, Introduction, 1-2.

¹⁷⁶ The application of sociology of knowledge categories to apocalypticism is, of course, not new. See, for example, Hanson's reference to an apocalyptic system of thought as a "symbolic universe" ("Apocalypticism," 28).

¹⁷⁷ Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1967), 32.

¹⁷⁸ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Anchor Books Edition; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1967), 92-95.

source is the text of 1 Corinthians, a rhetorical analysis of the role of the future statements in the argument of Paul to his readers is necessary. Such an analysis will help to sort out the interaction between the symbolic language of the text and the thought and behavior of individuals within the social structure.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FUNCTIONS OF DIVINE JUDGMENT IN JEWISH TEXTS

Since the goal of this whole study is to understand the function of Paul's references to future judgment in 1 Corinthians, the purposes of this chapter are limited. I hope to provide a functional typology of judgment language in Judaism from the Old Testament to the Mishnah, in order that the function of Paul's references to judgment can be illuminated by comparison. The concern is not so much to describe the menu of traditions and conceptions available to Paul from his Jewish heritage as it is to explore the varieties of situations in which an appeal to God's judgment proved useful. For this reason I pay little attention to the development of terms and motifs or to the growth of particular ways of conceiving of God's judgment. In addition to the analysis of the functions of judgment itself, some attention will also be given to the function of a few motifs connected with judgment language, selected because of their importance in 1 Cor 3-4.

1. The Functions of Divine Judgment in the Old Testament

Since our concern is with the OT as it was used by early Christians and Paul, the Greek OT must be the primary text.¹ The historical development of judgment conceptions in Israel is also not relevant to our purposes here. Rather, themes and functions are traced throughout the whole corpus of literature. The material can be organized under four headings.

Moral Recompense Within the Life of an Individual or Nation

Although not always considered together with the concept of divine judgment because of the frequent absence of judgment vocabulary and because the agency of God is not always made explicit, statements about moral recompense—reward for good actions and punishment for

¹ Included here are the books of the Hebrew canon translated into Greek and also Sirach, since judgment language in this writing remains within the parameters of OT usage.

evil—are of fundamental importance in the Old Testament.² The conviction that the actions of an individual result in appropriate consequences is especially prominent in wisdom literature.

The righteous will never fail,
but the ungodly will not occupy the land. (Prov 10:30)³

Sometimes it seems that actions carry their own built-in consequences.

Behold, [the wicked]. . . will fall into the hole which he made;
his action will return upon his own head,
and his injustice will come down on his own crown. (Ps 7:15-17)

More often, however, the agency of God is made explicit.

Thus God returned the evil of Abimelech, which he did to his father by killing his seventy brothers. And God returned all the evil of the men of Shechem upon their own heads. . . . (Judg 9:56-57)

Often the consequence of an action is an equivalent recompense. In Judg 1:6-7 the thumbs and large toes of Adonibezek are cut off by his Israelite captors, prompting his response:

Seventy kings with their thumbs and large toes cut off used to gather what fell under my table. Just as I did, so God paid me back (ἀνταπέδωκεν).

Sirach 28:1 contains a nicely balanced statement of the *lex talionis*:

The one who takes vengeance
will discover vengeance from the Lord.

² Hermann Gunkel, "Vergeltung im Alten Testament," *RGK* (2nd ed., 1931), vol. 5, 1529-33. See also Roman Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen: Untersuchungen zur Bedeutung der menschlichen Taten im Frühjudentum, Neuen Testament und Frühchristentum* (WUNT 2/9; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1983), 143. P. Zerafa ("Retribution in the Old Testament," *Angelicum* 50 [1973], 465-70) gives a good survey of the terms used in Hebrew. I use "recompense" as a neutral term, rather than the word "retribution," which has a more negative connotation.

³ All OT quotations in this chapter are my own translations from the Greek, except where otherwise noted. I follow the text as edited by Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935). Chapter and verse citations are according to the Greek text. Where the Masoretic Text (MT) and/or the English of the RSV (E) differ from the Greek, this is indicated in parentheses. I have not, however, thought it necessary to note in each instance that 1-4 Kingdoms in the Greek correspond to 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings.

Often in the OT the responsibility of the individual⁴ and the possibility of either a good or a bad recompense is expressed by means of the preposition "according to" (κατά):

For you will render to each according to his works.

ὅτι σὺ ἀποδώσεις ἑκάστῳ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ. (Ps 61:13 [62:13MT; 12E])⁵

Sometimes such statements serve not only as a motivation for parenesis⁶ but also as a means of expressing confidence in God's justice.⁷ It is clear that in the OT, even in the regulated world of the wisdom writings, one is never far from the conviction that moral recompense is a divine concern.

God's agency in bringing appropriate recompense becomes even clearer when the standard applied is the Mosaic covenant, as in Exod 20:5-6.⁸ God's assurance of recompense serves to protect the covenant. This can be applied to individuals within Israel, as in Exod 32:32-35 and Deut 29:17-20 (29:18-21E). More often, however, the threat of recompense is directed to the people as a whole, as in the conclusion of the Holiness Code in Lev 26:14-19 and also in Deut 30:16-18. The whole narrative of Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings (Deuteronomistic History) illustrates how this proclamation of covenantal recompense worked itself out in the history of Israel.⁹

All of the above texts conceive of recompense solely within the normal flow of the life of an individual or nation. There is no idea in the OT writings of a definitive history-ending or postmortem moral recompense. A few wisdom texts do speak of moral recompense in language that in later times is associated with eschatological judgment, such as "day of wrath" in Job 20:28.¹⁰ Sirach 39:28-31 speaks of winds, fire, and other agents of destruction which God has created for vengeance on the ungodly "in the time of consummation" (ἐν καιρῷ συντελείας).¹¹ Sirach 7:17

⁴ The words ἑκάστος or ἄνθρωπος are often used in recompense statements. See Heiligenthal, *Werke*, 150.

⁵ See also Ps 102:10 (103:10MT); Job 34:11; Prov 24:12; Sir 11:26; 16:12, 14; 35:22 (35:19E); 2 Kgdms 22:21, 25; 3 Kgdms 8:39 (= 2 Chr 6:30); Jer 17:10; 39:19 (32:19MT); Ezek 18:30; 33:20.

⁶ Heiligenthal, *Werke*, 159-60.

⁷ Job 34:11; Ezek 33:20; 2 Kgdms 22:21, 25; Jer 39:19 (32:19MT).

⁸ See also Num 14:18; Deut 5:9-10; 7:9-10; Jer 39:18 (32:18MT).

⁹ See also Ps 49 (50MT), especially vv. 4-6; this is a judgment scene in which God warns his covenant people of recompense for sin.

¹⁰ See also Job 21:30; 36:18; Exod 32:34; Prov 16:2; Sir 5:7.

¹¹ See also Sir 21:9-10. On these texts see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 333-35.

warns that "vengeance on the ungodly is fire and worms."¹² Yet when all these texts are examined in their contexts it becomes apparent that the recompense is still thought of as carried out by natural means within history. It is the possibility of sudden unanticipated or horrible death or loss which gives these texts their power.

The function of such moral recompense statements in the OT is clearly to provide a framework and motivation for exhortation. The possible consequences of one's actions are portrayed, drawing on observation or history or faith in the justice of God. Both individuals (especially in wisdom literature) and the nation as a whole (especially in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History) can be addressed by moral recompense language. Group identity, however, is never the main focus. Rather, the concern is the individual's relation to a moral standard or covenant code.

Klaus Koch, following von Rad, has attempted to make a sharp distinction between a doctrine of recompense (*Vergeltung*) and the concept of divine judgment in the OT.¹³ He argues that the Hebrew OT does not teach a doctrine of divine retribution but only the primitive idea that one's actions carry within them their own consequences. Koch's thesis has rightly been vigorously attacked as too narrow and one-sided.¹⁴ In any case, as Koch himself points out, the Greek OT by its frequent use of ἀποδιδόναι and cognates makes more explicit than the MT the concept of God's agency in giving recompense.¹⁵ Nevertheless, Koch's thesis helps to identify a major feature of OT moral recompense statements in distinction from most divine judgment statements: God's role as the agent of recompense is limited by regular standards, the recompense can be predicted from the actions taken, there is no situation of human conflict to be arbitrated, and the recompense is seen as part of the regular flow of everyday life.

Within this category of moral recompense language in the OT, two

¹² Probably reflecting Isa 66:24. See also Sir 12:6.

¹³ Klaus Koch, "Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im Alten Testament?", in *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung in Religion und Recht des Alten Testament* (ed. Klaus Koch; Wege der Forschung 125; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972), 130-80; see especially the summary on pp. 166-68. Koch sees a chronological development from a primitive self-contained concept to a belief in a more active role for God. Part of his point is that "*Vergeltung*" implies an outside standard, a juristic process, and degrees of reward and punishment, but in the OT there is only a choice between ruin and total well-being.

¹⁴ Josef Scharbert, "ŠLM im Alten Testament," in *Um das Prinzip der Vergeltung*, 322-23; Zerafa, "Retribution," 474-75, 480; J. Kenneth Kuntz, "The Retribution Motif in Psalmsic Wisdom," *ZAW* 89 (1977), 223-33; Heiligenthal, *Werke*, 143-44.

¹⁵ Koch, "Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma," 175. See, for example, Exod 20:5; Num 14:18; Deut 5:9; 7:9-10; Judg 1:7; 2 Kgdms 22:21, 25; Ps 61:13 (62:13MT; 12E); 90:8 (91:8MT); Prov 24:12; 25:22; Isa 65:6-7; Hos 12:3, 15 (12:2, 14E); Sir 11:26; 12:6; 33:13.

related motifs call for special comment. First is the promise of "reward." Although the positive side of recompense receives less attention than the negative, the idea of reward is by no means neglected, and often μισθός and related words are used. The idea of reward can be stated as part of a balanced recompense principle, as in Prov 11:21 (11:21a and 18bMT):

One who deals with an unjust handshake will not go without punishment;
but the one who sows righteousness will receive a sure reward (μισθὸν
πιστόν).

Or it can be expressed with only the positive side, as in Sirach 51:30:

Do your work before the appointed time,
and in God's time he will give you your reward.¹⁶

Reward is connected with the action or good faith of an individual as a promise,¹⁷ as a means of self-commendation,¹⁸ or as a means to commend the action of another.¹⁹ In a few prophetic texts reward is promised as a sign of God's favor on his people as a whole.²⁰ In Eccl 9:5 the hope of a reward for the righteous is denied. The main point to note here is that this language of divine reward is used in the OT only to speak of moral recompense; it is never connected with the more specific language of divine judgment. The underlying image is not that of the courtroom but of the paymaster's office.

A second motif serves to provide a grounding for God's recompense in the conviction that all deeds, and even thoughts, are known to God. This idea often in the OT functions to back up the language of moral recompense in a parenetic context.²¹ So we read in Prov 24:12:

But if you say, "I do not know this,"
know that the Lord knows the hearts of all,
and the one who formed breath for all knows all things;
he renders to each one according to his works.

¹⁶ Translation according to RSV. See also Prov 19:17; 25:22; Sir 2:8; 11:22, 26.

¹⁷ Gen 15:1; 2 Chr 15:7.

¹⁸ Gen 30:18; 1 Kgdms 26:33; 2 Kgdms 22:21, 25; 2 Esdr 15:19 (Neh 5:19); 2 Esdr 23:14, 22, 31 (Neh 13:14, 22, 31).

¹⁹ Ruth 2:12; 1 Kgdms 24:19.

²⁰ Isa 40:10; 62:11; Jer 38:16 (31:16MT).

²¹ See Heiligenthal, *Werke*, 156-57.

Or we read in Jer 17:10:

I the Lord search hearts and test minds, in order to give to each according to his ways and according to the fruits of his practices.

Although people may think that their thoughts and deeds are known only to themselves,²² God in fact sees and knows all,²³ and thus can recompense with complete thoroughness and fairness.

Some final points can now be made about the OT use of moral recompense language: (1) Although at times it is suggested that deeds carry their own consequences within them, in the Greek OT as a whole it is clearly God who both guarantees and actively engages in the process of recompense. God's action is limited only by the standard of justice, and thorough justice is often guaranteed by the fact that no deed or thought escapes God's attention. (2) The conception of recompense can be used to explain historical fortunes or present conditions, but more often it is used in parenetical contexts to undergird the thought of individual responsibility for actions, or national responsibility for keeping the covenant. (3) Thus recompense language most often looks to the future, but always a future within the course of history. Recompense language usually has some sort of future conditional form (if . . . then. . . .) and does not make pronouncements about what is to befall specific people. Such language does not anticipate a definitive act which will change the course of history or bring it to an end, but rather points to a repeated ebb and flow of reward and loss. (4) Recompense language is not in the OT generated by situations of conflict or crisis; it relates rather to a sense of the ongoing need for individual moral responsibility. Thus the language is mostly not drawn from the realm of forensic judgment and lawsuits, but rather from the realm of the economic life: pay, reward, loss, compensation.

²² See Job 22:13-14; 24:13-17; Ps 9:32 (10:11MT); 63:6-7 (64:6-7MT; 5-6E); Isa 29:15; Sir 15:17; 23:18.

²³ God watches the evil and the good (Prov 15:3) and searches the righteous and the ungodly in Ps 10:4-5 (11:4-5MT); he knows the ways and deeds of people: Job 11:11; 34:21-25; Ps 32:15 (33:15MT); Prov 16:2; Eccl 12:14; Jer 39:19 (32:19MT); Jonah 3:10; Sir 15:18-19; 17:15, 19-20; 23:19; 39:19; he knows or searches hearts and thoughts: 3 Kgdms 8:39 (=2 Chr 6:30); 1 Chr 28:9; 29:17; Prov 15:11; 17:3; 24:12; Jer 17:9-10; Sir 42:18, 20. God will even reveal a person's deeds to other people: Sir 1:30; 11:27. On this conception of testing the heart in wisdom literature see Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 1 (New York & Evanston: Harper & Row, 1962), 437.

The Announcement of God's Decision to Recompense His People

The distinguishing characteristic of this category of texts, which is closely related to the previous category, is that here a representative of God announces that in fact unrighteous actions have occurred, God has decided to put recompense into action, and punishment is imminent. There is no balanced threat and promise, no conditional statement of possibilities, but a pronouncement directed against a specific target in a particular situation. Such a pronouncement can be directed to an individual, such as Nathan announcing God's judgment to David in 2 Kgdms 12:7-14 or Elijah to Ahab in 3 Kgdms 20:17-24 (1 Kings 21:17-24MT).²⁴

More often, of course, this sort of pronouncement is found in the writing prophets, directed against the nation as a whole.²⁵ Often employing language associated with the covenant, the prophets announce that the covenant has been broken and the dire consequences are soon to come.²⁶ Although the conception of moral recompense undergirds these prophetic announcements and some of the same language is used,²⁷ in these texts the role of God as judge is much more sharply defined and vividly expressed.²⁸ It is often said that God's judgment against Israel is inflicted by his righteous wrath (ὀργή or θυμός).²⁹ God's judging wrath is often connected with the image of destructive fire,³⁰ or fire may be seen as the literal or metaphorical means of judgment.³¹ The

²⁴ See also Amos 7:16-17; 4 Kgdms 1:3-4; 1 Kgdms 2:27-36; 15:17-31; Isa 22:15-25; Jer 22:24-27; 43:29-30 (36:29-30MT). On the form of these judgment announcements to individuals see Claus Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 129-68. See also Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 142-43.

²⁵ For example, Amos 3:2 and Jer 1:16. See Westermann, *Basic Forms*, 169-204. On judgment in the prophets see W. Cossmann, *Die Entwicklung des Gerichtsgedankens bei den alttestamentlichen Propheten* (BZAW 29; Giessen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1915).

²⁶ Jer 7:8-15; Ezek 5:7-8; Hos 13:4-8; Amos 2:4-5; Mic 6:1-4.

²⁷ Especially ἀποδιδόναι and cognates: Isa 65:6; Hos 9:7; 12:3 (12:2E); 12:15 (12:14E).

²⁸ Note the use of κριτεῖν and cognates: Isa 1:24; 3:13-15; Ezek 5:8, 10, 15; 7:5 (7:8MT); 11:9-11; 20:35-36; 36:19; Hos 6:5; 12:3 (12:2E); Mal 3:5.

²⁹ Jer 23:19-20; 37:23-24 (30:23-24MT). See also Isa 1:24; 5:25; 10:5-6; Ezek 5:13, 15; 7:5 (7:8MT); 36:18. The prophetic announcement of God's wrath against Israel brings to fruition the threat of wrath for breaking the covenant in Deut 7:4; 11:17; 29:19 (29:20E). This threat had been applied earlier in Israel's history: Num 14:34; 17:11 (16:46E); 25:3-4; 32:10, 13-14; Josh 7:1; 22:18; Judg 2:14, 20; 3:8; 4 Kgdms 13:3; 22:13, 17; 23:26; 24:3, 20.

³⁰ Isa 5:24; 9:18 (9:19E); Jer 4:4; 15:14; 21:12; Ezek 22:20-22, 31; Lam 2:4. See also Deut 32:22.

³¹ Jer 4:26; 7:20; 11:16; 17:27; Amos 2:5. Fire had been seen as the means of God's punishing recompense in Israel's history: Gen 19:24; Lev 10:2; 4 Kgdms 1:10, 12.

The imminently expected sudden onslaught of God's recompensing judgment is sometimes depicted by the phrase "the day of wrath."³² The idea of a determined time when God's judgment of his people will take place is often expressed with the phrase "the day of the Lord" or simply "that day." It should be noted, however, that "the day of the Lord" could be used not only of condemnation, but also of salvation, and not just of a future day but also of a day in the past.³³ In Amos 5:18-20 the people's hope for the day of the Lord as a time of national victory is transformed into the prophet's proclamation of coming doom for the northern kingdom.³⁴ It is important to note that in all the texts within this category the coming judgment on Israel remains an act of recompense within history.

In this category of judgment language there is not much need for God to have the role of discerning hidden deeds or secret thoughts, since the sins of Israel are public knowledge. Jeremiah warns in 16:17-18 that God sees all the evil ways of Israel; nothing is concealed, and God will recompense their sin. Two other passages in Jeremiah mention the need to test the people, both times using the image of the refiner's fire, once with Jeremiah as the agent (6:27-30) and once with God as the agent (9:6-8 [9:7-9E]).³⁵

Some conclusions can now be drawn concerning this category of judgment language in the OT: (1) In these texts the double possibility of moral recompense language gives way to a one-sided proclamation that God will punish the nation. (2) Accordingly, the language is colored both by a greater role for God and by more forensic language--we enter the realm of crime and punishment. (3) The situation which calls forth the judgment language is not any conflict between people or nations but the actions of the people against their covenant with God. The judgment pronouncement is almost always directed against the people as a whole.³⁶ (4) The scene of the judgment is still totally within the events of history. It is not considered to be a history-transforming or cosmic event.

³² Lam 1:12; 2:1, 21-22; Ezek 22:24; Zeph 1:15, 18; 2:2-3.

³³ A. J. Everson, "Day of the Lord," *IDBSup*, 209.

³⁴ Gerhard von Rad and Gerhard Delling, "ἡμέρα," *TDNT*, vol. 2, 945. Other uses of "the day" to announce coming judgment on Israel are in Isa 2:11-12, 17; 3:18; 22:1-14; Ezek 7:4 (7:7MT); 7:10, 12; Joel 1:15; 2:1-2, 11; Amos 3:14; 8:9, 13; Zeph 1:7-18; 2:2-3.

³⁵ Both texts use the verb δοκιμάζειν.

³⁶ Occasional texts allow for the effectiveness of an individual's repentance: Ezek 14:12-23; 18:30-32; 33:17-20; Jer 38:29-30 (31:29-30MT). See Cossmann, *Entwicklung des Gerichtsgedankens*, 198-99.

Appeals to the Higher Court of God's Judgment

Israelite society, like other societies, had its judicial system for determining and punishing guilt for crimes and for arbitrating civil disputes.³⁷ The system could also make room for the taking of personal vengeance by one's own hand (see Num 35:9-34). Yet many situations of wrong and conflict were not adequately resolved by these societal mechanisms alone, because of the powerlessness of some individuals or groups, because some disputes were beyond the jurisdiction or competence of the courts, because of reluctance of an individual to prosecute in certain delicate situations, because of one's inability to win credence, because of corrupt judges, or because the situation was genuinely ambiguous. In such cases one needed a higher court of appeal. In the OT God often serves as that court of appeal.³⁸

In a few cases an appeal to God is a part of the legal process itself, when by means of a sacred oath God is invoked either to resolve a case or to guarantee the truthfulness of testimony, as in Exod 22:7-10 (22:8-11E) and 3 Kgdms 8:31-32 (=2 Chr 6:22-23). So also in the ordeal prescribed for a wife suspected of adultery in Num 5:11-31 it is only God who can know and reveal the truth or falsity of the woman's claim to innocence.³⁹

In a number of OT narratives there is an appeal made to God to arbitrate a dispute.⁴⁰ In Gen 16:5 Sarah reacts to Hagar's contempt with anger and an accusation of Abraham, concluding with the words, "May God judge between me and you!" In Gen 31:53, as part of their covenant ceremony Jacob and Laban agree to avoid further conflict; they back up their oath with the words, "The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor will judge between us." In 1 Chr 12:18 (12:17E) David warns new recruits against betraying him, with the words, "May the God of our fathers see and rebuke." In Judg 11:27 Jephthah tries to keep the Ammonites from attacking Israel with the words:

³⁷ On legal proceedings in the OT see Arnold Gamper, *Gott als Richter in Mesopotamien und im Alten Testament: Zum Verständnis einer Gebetsbitte* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1966), 103-141; also Herbert Niehr, *Rechtsprechung in Israel: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Gerichtsorganisation im Alten Testament* (SBS 130; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1987).

³⁸ The terminology is suggested by Westermann (*Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, 112) with reference to Judg 11:16-20.

³⁹ On the procedures of oath, divination, and ordeal in the OT see T. S. Frymer, "Ordeal, Judicial," *IDBSup*, 638-40.

⁴⁰ On the following grouping of texts see Gamper, *Gott als Richter*, 226-27. Occasionally the speaker refers to a decision already executed by God in a dispute: Gen 30:6; 2 Kgdms 18:19, 31.

I have not sinned against you, and you do evil against me by making war on me. May the Lord who judges judge today between the Israelites and the Ammonites.

The people can appeal to God as judge in a dispute with their leaders. In Exod 5:21 the people accuse Moses and Aaron with the words, "May God see you and judge, because you made us stink before Pharaoh. . . ." Such an appeal to God can function as an oath which guarantees truthfulness and innocence. In Josh 22:21-23 the trans-Jordan tribes answer accusations of idolatry:

God, God is Lord, and God, God the Lord himself knows, and Israel itself will know! If in apostasy we have done an offence before the Lord, may he not spare us in this sin! And if we have built for ourselves an altar so that we may turn away from the Lord our God. . . the Lord will demand an accounting.

In most of these cases the appeal to God serves as an alternative to taking actual action. So in fact the conflict can be left unresolved, at least for the moment. The appealing party is content to wait upon God's decision. This dynamic is clear in David's words as he confronts Saul, who is seeking to kill him. David, however, refuses to take action against Saul and instead confronts Saul with an appeal to God:

May the Lord decide between me and you, and may the Lord give me vengeance at your expense; for my own hand will not be against you. . . . May the Lord become judge and arbitrator between me and you! May the Lord see and give me judgment and release me from your hand. (1 Kgdms 24:13, 16 [24:12, 15E])

David makes the same point again in his dispute with Nabal, after Nabal has suddenly died:

Blessed be the Lord, who gave me judgment for the calumny of Nabal against me and who preserved his servant from doing evil deeds, and the Lord returned the evil of Nabal on his own head. (1 Kgdms 25:39)

Thus David recognizes that God's judgment of Nabal has anticipated his own desire for vengeance and kept him from doing evil.

On another level God enters into the judicial process as the impartial and incorruptible judge who guarantees the rights of powerless groups, such as orphans and widows and resident aliens. Thus in 2 Chr 19:7 Jehoshaphat warns his judicial appointees to judge with integrity, "for with the Lord our God there is no injustice nor partiality nor accepting of bribes." In Deut 10:17-18 Moses grounds his admonition with a

reminder of God, "who does not show partiality or receive a bribe, who performs judgment for the proselyte and orphan and widow. . . ." ⁴¹

When an individual looks to God as the source of personal justice, the reference often takes the form of a cry for vengeance against the opponent. In Judg 16:28 Samson prays that the Lord would help him take vengeance on the Philistines for the loss of his eyes. At other times the prayer is for God to take action, as when David calls for justice on Joab for his murder of Abner, justice which David himself is unwilling to take: "May the Lord recompense the evildoer according to his wickedness." ⁴²

Such appeals to God by one who perceives himself to be the victim of unjust opposition can emphasize either the request for punishment on the opponents or for personal deliverance, or both at once. This is illustrated in the personal laments of Jeremiah. Jeremiah perceives himself as both helpless in the hands of his opponents and innocent in the sight of God. ⁴³ God knows his innocence, and God will judge his enemies:

O Lord, who judges righteous deeds and tests minds and hearts, may I see your vengeance on them, for to you I have revealed my righteous plea. ⁴⁴

His prayer in 17:18 looks for both deliverance and vengeance:

Let those who persecute me be put to shame,
but let me not be put to shame.

Jeremiah sees the Lord as his only court of appeal. He rests his case here, confident that God knows his innocence and his opponents' guilt. Therefore, God will enact a just judgment for both parties.

The appeal to God's judgment which we see in these laments of Jeremiah is also a frequent motif in the individual laments in the Psalms and related texts. In these passages we see a constant appeal of the individual to God's court of justice. Frequently God is asked to confirm the suppliant's innocence, as in Ps 25:1-2 (26:1-2MT):

Judge me, Lord, for I have walked in my innocence,
and hoping in the Lord I will not grow weak.

⁴¹ See also Ps 81:1-4 (82:1-4MT); Job 34:19; Sir 35:11-15 (35:12-15E). On this concept see Jouette M. Bassler, *Divine Impartiality: Paul and a Theological Axiom* (SBLDS 59; Scholars Press, 1982), 7-17.

⁴² 2 Kgdms 3:39. See also 2 Chr 24:22 and 2 Esdr 16:14 (Neh 6:14MT).

⁴³ See the account in Jer 33 (26MT), especially vv. 14-15.

⁴⁴ Jer 11:20. See the similar words in Jer 20:12. See also 12:3; 15:15; 18:23.

Test me, Lord, and try me,
test with fire my mind and my heart.⁴⁵

The psalmist can appeal to God the judge for deliverance.⁴⁶ God the judge is expected to punish the supplicant's enemies.⁴⁷ The supplicant, in short, rests his case with God the righteous judge.⁴⁸ The Psalmist often sets his personal appeal to God in the context of the conviction that God is the righteous judge of all the earth and aids all who are similarly oppressed.⁴⁹ Further, God the righteous judge exalts the downtrodden and humiliates the arrogant, the oppressors, and the boastful.⁵⁰ The appeal to God to arbitrate conflicts and settle disputes becomes a fixed part of the liturgical life of Israel.

The motif of God's knowledge of actions and thoughts also plays a large role in these appeals to God's judgment. In Deut 15:9 it is implied that God's knowledge of a malicious "word hidden in the heart" guarantees justice for the victim. Sometimes the supplicant invokes God's knowledge of the enemy's actions and plots,⁵¹ but more often the omniscience of God serves to underscore the innocence of the supplicant and thus his confidence in ultimate vindication before God.⁵²

Some concluding observations on this third category of OT judgment language can now be made: (1) Unlike the language of moral recompense or of condemnation of Israel, here it is situations of human conflict which call forth talk of divine judgment. (2) Accordingly, there is much judicial terminology used here, especially words based on the *κρίν*-root. (3) There is less emphasis in these texts on the morality of actions and more on the mere fact of aggression and strife. (4) Although some scholars have stressed the corporate nature of OT judgment concep-

⁴⁵ See also Ps 7:9 (7:8E); 16:3 (17:3MT); 17:21-25 (18:21-25MT, 18:20-24E); 138:23-24 (139:23-24MT).

⁴⁶ Ps 34:22-24 (35:22-24MT); 42:1 (43:1MT); 53:3 (54:3MT; 54:1E); 58:2-6 (59:2-6MT; 59:1-5E). On these prayers for deliverance see Gamper, *Gott als Richter*, 4 and 10.

⁴⁷ Ps 7:6; 27:4 (28:4MT); 53:6-7 (54:6-7MT; 54:4-5E); 57:11-12 (58:11-12MT; 58:10-11E); 68:23-29 (69:23-29MT; 69:22-28E); 93:22-23 (94:22-23MT); 108:20 (109:20MT).

⁴⁸ See also Ps 9:5 (9:4E), and in the servant songs of Isaiah, 49:4 and 50:8.

⁴⁹ Ps 7:7-9 (7:6-8E); 1 Kgdms 2:10; Ps 9:6, 9, 20 (9:5, 8, 19E); 75:10 (76:10MT; 76:9E); 81:1-8 (82:1-8MT); 95:10, 13 (96:10, 13MT); [note that Ps 95:12b-13 = 1 Chr 16:33]; Ps 97:9 (98:9MT); 102:6 (103:6MT); 145:7 (146:7MT).

⁵⁰ Ps 17:28 (18:28MT; 18:27E); 30:24 (31:24MT; 31:23E); 74:5-8 (75:5-8MT; 75:4-7E); 93:2-4 (94:2-4MT); 1 Kgdms 2:1-10; Sir 35:17-19.

⁵¹ 1 Kgdms 2:3; Ps 93:7-11 (94:7-11MT); Jer 11:20; 18:23; 23:24.

⁵² Josh 22:22; Job 23:10-11; 31:4, 6; Ps 16:3 (17:3MT); 25:2 (26:2MT); 43:22 (44:22MT; 44:21E); 138:1-5, 23-24 (139:1-5, 23-24MT); Jer 12:3; 15:15; 17:16; 20:12. In Ps 7:10 (7:9E) the motif seems to underscore both the guilt of enemies and innocence of the supplicant. In Ps 68:6 (69:6MT; 69:5E) the supplicant asks for vindication in spite of the fact that God knows his folly.

tions,⁵³ in this category God often intervenes for and against individuals. (5) The appeal to God's judgment often serves in lieu of taking matters into one's own hands; thus such appeals can function as a means of catharsis for the hostility of the powerless individual, as a safety valve to keep violence from escalating, and as a means of encouragement for the aggrieved party in a situation where there is little hope for human justice. (6) All of God's judgments in this category in the OT are clearly seen as taking place within history and without any history-transforming significance.

Israel and the Nations in God's Judgment

In the previous three functional categories God's judgment affected only Israel, individuals within Israel, or non-Israelites on the basis of a purely moral recompense. But the OT, of course, also knows of a judgment of God that makes a corporate distinction between Israel and other nations. Sometimes judgment language is used simply to describe a victory given to Israel by God.⁵⁴ But more often it is God himself who will inflict judgment on nations who oppose Israel and its Lord.⁵⁵ The prophetic oracles against foreign nations often use judgment language.⁵⁶ The most frequent images of judgment on the nations, as was also the case in the judgment of Israel, are God's wrath and the fire that destroys.⁵⁷

The judgment of the enemies of Israel serves to remind Israel that, in spite of God's judgment on his people for their sins, Israel still has a special destiny distinct from that of other nations who do not serve the Lord. Therefore, such condemnations of other nations are seen as vindications and are often coupled with the promise of salvation to Israel, especially in texts from the post-exilic period.⁵⁸ The "day of the

⁵³ For example, Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 66.

⁵⁴ Exod 17:7; Num 31:2-3; 2 Chr 20:12.

⁵⁵ Gen 15:14; Exod 12:12; Deut 32:34-43; Ps 109:5-6 (110:5-6MT); 136:8 (137:8MT).

⁵⁶ Isa 34:5-8; 41:1; Jer 32:31 (25:31MT); 27:15, 27-29, 34 (50:15, 27-29, 34MT); 28:9-11, 24, 36, 56 (51:9-11, 24, 36, 56MT); Lam 3:59, 64; Ezek 25:17; 28:22, 26; 30:19; 38:22; 39:21; Zeph 2:4-15; Nah 1:2.

⁵⁷ Ps 20:10 (21:10MT, 9E); 78:6 (79:6MT); Isa 10:12-19; 26:11; 30:27-28, 30-33; 47:14; 51:22-23; Ezek 21:33-37 (21:28-32E); 25:14; 38:18-19; 39:6; Amos 1:4, 7, 10, 12, 14; 2:2; Mic 5:14 (5:15E); Nah 1:2, 6, 10; Zeph 3:8; Sir 36:7-9. Note that fire has a purifying, not destroying, function in the judgment scenes of Isa 4:4; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:2-3.

⁵⁸ Isa 10:25; 33:22; 35:4; 61:2; 63:1-7; Joel 4:2, 12 (3:2, 12E); Mic 7:9. See Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 23; Cossmann, *Entwicklung des Gerichtsgedankens*, 208-209.

Lord" in post-exilic prophecy becomes no longer a day of the condemnation of Israel but a day of vindication and salvation.⁵⁹

Within the OT there are some striking judgment scenes which proclaim God's judgment as both future salvation and condemnation, often calling upon moral recompense language raised to a new key. In some of these scenes cosmic and mythic language is used, and they move toward seeing judgment as a single event which encompasses the universe and transcends history. Yet even in these scenes, with the single exception of Daniel, there is no explicit conception of a judgment which brings history to an end and determines the postmortem fate of groups or individuals.

The prophet Joel employs vivid cosmic imagery to announce a day of the Lord, which will first appear as destruction (1:15; 2:1-2, 11) but then as salvation and vindication for Israel (3:4-5 [2:31-32E]; 4:2, 12, 14 [3:2, 12, 14E]). In spite of the cataclysmic and universal language, however, this scene envisions a judgment within history and functions to call people to repentance. The same is true of the description of coming judgment in Malachi. In Malachi, however, the judgment creates a distinction between the righteous and the wicked. This is shown by the use of a vice list in Mal 3:5, by the implication in 3:16-18 and 19-21 (4:1-3E) that only some will heed the call to obedience, and by the stress on a preparatory purification before the judgment in 3:1-4 and 22-23 (3:23-24MT; 4:5-6E). In this judgment scene moral recompense and covenant language dominate, but the framework is no longer a purely mundane recompense but rather a single act of divine judgment, a "day of the Lord." Yet even in this text there is no thought of postmortem fates.

In the "Isaiah apocalypse" of chapters 24-27 judgment has a limited role. Looking to the day when God will judge his enemies and establish his own reign (24:17-23; 26:20-27:2), the prophet envisions a gathering of exiled Israel (27:12-13). A similar proclamation of judgment on the nations and salvation for Israel is offered in Isa 34-35 (esp. 34:1-8 and 35:4). In Isa 65-66, however, the proclamation of judgment arises from a crisis within Israel and foresees a division between the righteous and the wicked within the people of Israel. In Isa 65:6-12 recompense language is used to indicate that, although God will repay the sins of the bad cluster of grapes which is disobedient Israel, others within Israel will be saved.⁶⁰ The differing fortunes of the remnant in a restored Jerusa-

⁵⁹ Isa 13:6-13; 34:8; 61:2; 63:4; Jer 26:10 (46:10MT); 37:7 (30:7MT); 29:4 (47:4MT); Ezek 30:3; Amos 9:11; Obad 15 (note here the use of moral recompense language). See also Deut 32:35. See Everson, "Day of the Lord," 209-10; von Rad, "ἡμέρα," 945.

⁶⁰ See also 66:6. The division within Israel is also shown in 65:13-15.

lem and the enemies of God (v. 14) are underscored by a description of a universal fiery judgment in 66:15-16. The remnant who worship the Lord will see the horrible punishment of the transgressors (66:24).⁶¹ In these concluding chapters of Isaiah we see both moral recompense language and language from prophetic announcements of judgment on Israel or on the nations used for a new purpose. A social conflict within Israel is addressed by means of a vision of a future judgment between the wicked and the righteous.⁶²

Finally, we must consider a text which is unique in the OT for its explicit promise of postmortem judgment, Daniel 12:1-3:⁶³

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will be raised,
some to eternal life and some to reviling and eternal shame.

(v. 2, according to Theodotion)

George Nickelsburg has studied these verses at length and concludes that here resurrection of the dead is seen as the only appropriate means for the vindication of the righteous who had died in religious persecution.⁶⁴ The crisis promoted by Antiochus Epiphanes and the conflict between opposing groups in Israel has lifted the conception of divine judgment to a level unique in the OT. At the same time the rather isolated character of this passage is underscored by the absence of any explicit judgment language or images associated with a judgment scene. Only the alternative results are stated. This fact alone indicates that the function of this postmortem judgment in Daniel is different from other OT judgment texts.

We can now draw together some observations on this fourth category of judgment in the OT. (1) Unlike the other categories, here the appeal to God's judgment serves to bolster group identity, usually of Israel as a whole, but occasionally of a group within Israel. (2) Such images of judgment are applied most readily in situations of defeat, crisis, or group conflict. (3) Only in this category does judgment language sometimes assume a cosmic, universal, or history-transcending aspect.

⁶¹ For a detailed analysis of Isa 65-66 in terms of a crisis and conflict within Israel see Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 134-86, 388-89. Hanson also treats Zech 9-14 in this connection (pp. 280-401), but in spite of frequent references to the coming "day," there is no real judgment scene here.

⁶² Ibid., 160 and 185.

⁶³ The judgment scene of Dan 7:9-14, 26-27, really speaks of royal enthronement and legislation and is thus outside of our concern.

⁶⁴ George W. E. Nickelsburg Jr., *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (HTS 26; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 11-27; especially pp. 18 and 27.

Conclusions on Judgment in the OT

When we look at the Greek OT as a source for later beliefs and conceptions about divine judgment, we can make the following observations. Judgment language in the OT is not limited to a single function but can serve (1) to provide warrants for behavior by warning of moral recompense in this life on both individuals and groups, (2) to explain and/or change the direction of a nation's policies or conduct, (3) to assure ultimate justice in conflicts between individuals or groups, or (4) to provide encouragement and direction to a nation or group experiencing defeat or crisis. Further, it is clear that in the OT neither the needs of moral exhortation nor of individual vindication generated a view of a one-time universal judgment which would end or transform history. Only where the nation or a group within it saw itself in a crisis situation did the beginnings of such an apocalyptic conception of divine judgment take shape.

2. The Functions of Divine Judgment in Judaism—An Overview

Before analyzing the functions of judgment language in a few selected texts, it will be helpful to map out briefly the whole terrain by seeing how the functional categories which we found in the OT are carried over and developed in later Jewish texts. The first thing to be noted is that one category disappears altogether—the prophetic announcement of God's judgment on Israel. It appears that after the OT prophets no one claimed the authority to make such a pronouncement on the whole people. Perhaps not all prophecy had ceased in Israel, but this sort certainly had, at least in literary form.

The Moral Recompense of Individuals

The language of individual moral recompense continues to be alive and well. Very often, as in the OT, it is seen to take place wholly on a mundane level. In the *Epistle of Aristeas* 131 Eleazar refers approvingly to the Mosaic instructions and the accompanying "visitations sent by God upon the guilty."⁶⁵ In *Joseph and Aseneth* 28:3 the wicked brothers of Joseph are brought to confess that "the Lord repaid us

⁶⁵ Translation by R. J. H. Shutt in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; ed. James H. Charlesworth; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983 & 1985), vol. 2, p. 21. (Hereafter abbreviated *OTP*).

according to our works."⁶⁶ The principle of equivalent recompense is represented in *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides* 11: "If you judge evilly, subsequently God will judge you."⁶⁷ Philo often speaks of rewards and punishments in this life as God's recompense for good and bad deeds.⁶⁸ Likewise Josephus, describing the goal of his history, states that people who obey God will gain happiness, but if they depart from the laws they will meet with disasters.⁶⁹ Thus the perspective of the Deuteronomistic History is carried on with vigor.⁷⁰

In addition to this continuing belief in the mundane recompense of God, there also eventually arose in Judaism a use of moral recompense language in an eschatological judgment. Such a conception of individual moral recompense after death is found mainly in texts which are relatively late, that is, in the second half of the first century C.E. or later. In the second temple period the needs of general moral exhortation, as distinct from exhortation in contexts of crisis and conflict, rarely, if ever, called forth a use of a final or postmortem judgment. Only later, and often in contexts influenced heavily by Greek conceptions of judgment, did the long-standing use of mundane moral recompense for ethical exhortation shift its focus to a final or postmortem individual recompense.

The earliest traces of a Jewish use of individual moral recompense language on an eschatological level are found in texts heavily influenced by Greek traditions. The following is a poetic fragment attributed to various Greek poets but probably preserved and reworked by a Jewish author:

Do you think, Niceratos, that those who die
having had in life a share in every delight
are covered by the earth and henceforth for all time

⁶⁶ Translation by C. Burchard in *OTP*, vol. 2, p. 245.

⁶⁷ Translation by P. W. van der Horst in *OTP*, vol. 2, p. 574. In a footnote van der Horst states that it is uncertain whether this refers to judgment in this life or in the hereafter. But the Greek μετέπειτα and the lack of any specific reference to postmortem judgment anywhere else in Pseudo-Phocylides suggests that recompense in this life is to be understood.

⁶⁸ *Plant.* 87; *Som.* 2.34; *Praem. Poen.* 2 and the whole treatise. See Ulrich Fischer, *Eschatologie und Jenseitserwartung im hellenistischen Diasporajudentum* (BZNW 44; Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1978), 187-210. See also *Deus Imm.* 74-76; *Conf. Ling.* 180-82; *Rer. Div. Her.* 271. Roger David Aus ("Gericht Gottes, II: Judentum" in *TRE*, vol. 12, p. 467) lists some passages in Philo which he says may refer to a final judgment, but in fact these texts all refer to recompense in the present life.

⁶⁹ *Antiquities* 1.14. See also 1:20. See Harold W. Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus* (HDR 7; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976), 67-68; 83-86.

⁷⁰ Also in rabbinic texts: *m.Qidd.* 1:10a; *m. 'Abot* 5:1 and 8.

have avoided the notice of the deity and escape him?
 Justice has an eye, which looks upon all things.
 And we believe there are two paths in Hades,
 one for the just, the other for the impious,
 even if the earth forever covers both.
 For if just and unjust will have one end,
 go off and rob, steal, plunder, act in rage.
 Make no mistake. There is, even in Hades, judgment,
 which God, the Lord of all, will execute,
 whose name is awesome, and I would not utter it.⁷¹

The idea of "two paths in Hades" is common in Greek and Roman tradition, as we will see in Chapter Three below. Except for the last line this whole fragment is congenial to pagan views. If this was indeed preserved in Jewish circles, it is striking that the judgment is related only to individual morality and occurs for each person after death.

Josephus, as was pointed out above, thinks of divine recompense mainly as a phenomenon of this life, but he does occasionally allude to a belief in moral recompense for individuals after death. For example, in *Against Apion* 2.218 those who keep God's laws win the prize of a "better life" after death.⁷² Further, Josephus attributes to the Pharisees and Essenes views of judgment which are more individualistic in function than those groups are likely to have actually held. He says that the Pharisees believe "that there are rewards and punishments under the earth for those who have led lives of virtue or vice."⁷³ In describing the beliefs of the Essenes, Josephus specifically compares them to Greek conceptions of postmortem judgment and states that the purpose of these beliefs is "to promote virtue and to deter from vice."⁷⁴ So it appears that Judaism in the hellenistic diaspora, when it did make use

⁷¹ Translation by Harold W. Attridge in *OTP*, vol. 2, pp. 828-29, where he also gives a summary of the complicated history of the preservation of this fragment in Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, and Pseudo-Justin. The Greek text is found in J. M. Edmonds, *The Fragments of Attic Comedy*, vol. 3A (Leiden: Brill, 1961), 94. Note that the "two paths in Hades" saying occurs also in another fragment attributed to Sophocles (Attridge's #6 in *OTP*, vol. 2, p. 826), where it is connected to a Stoic-inspired vision of eschatological conflagration. But these lines are clearly misplaced here, as is shown by the fact that Clement does not include them at this place. So in fact this fragment does not place postmortem judgment in an apocalyptic context. In addition to Attridge's general introduction to these fragments (*OTP*, vol. 2, pp. 821-22) see also Fischer, *Eschatologie*, 28-29.

⁷² But even here Josephus thinks primarily of a reward for those who die because of their stubborn obedience. On the individual eschatology of Josephus see Fischer, *Eschatologie*, 156.

⁷³ *Antiquities* 18.14. Translation by L. H. Feldman in *Josephus* (LCL, vol. 9), 13. See also *Jewish War* 2.163.

⁷⁴ *Jewish War* 2.155-57. Translation by H. St. J. Thackeray in *Josephus* (LCL, vol. 2), 383.

of an eschatological judgment, saw judgment as a means to encourage general virtue and discourage vice, in a way no different from the function of this-worldly recompense. Accordingly, the judgment is seen mainly as an individual postmortem fate rather than as a universal event at the end of history.⁷⁵

It is natural to look for conceptions of judgment in the Jewish apocalypses, but again we find that judgment functions as an individual moral recompense only in relatively late works. Scholars have often noted the growing emphasis on individual moral recompense in Jewish eschatology, by way of contrast with the earlier "political" or "national" eschatology.⁷⁶ What is not always made clear, however, is that in fact the use of eschatological judgment language in moral exhortation apart from situations of crisis or conflict does not become prominent until after the middle of the first century C.E.

The late first century C.E. apocalypse usually referred to as 4 Ezra deals with questions of theodicy arising from the destruction of the temple (see 4:22-25). The third vision, in 6:35-9:25, seeks to provide answers to Ezra's questions by shifting the discussion from the present to the time of final judgment.⁷⁷ It is individual obedience to Torah which will serve as the measure of judgment, and only a few will pass the test and be saved.⁷⁸ It seems that 4 Ezra in this vision of judgment has no sense of a corporate division; it is simply a matter of the perfection of individual obedience, regardless of one's social group.⁷⁹ This move to a more individual recompensing judgment in 4 Ezra was most likely encouraged by the failure of the hope for a corporate vindication of the nation.

⁷⁵ Fischer, *Eschatologie*, 3, 255, and 259. In the *Biblical Antiquities* of Pseudo-Philo we also see frequent individual recompense language, both on the mundane level (3:9; 44:10) and on a postmortem level (3:10; 19:12-13; 23:6, 13; 25:7; 51:5; 64:7).

⁷⁶ Russell, *Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 268-70; Wilhelm Bousset and Hugo Gressmann, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter* (4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1966), 289-301. See Hengel (*Judaism and Hellenism*, vol. 1, p. 202), who agrees with Bousset-Gressmann that this tendency owed something to the influence of hellenism.

⁷⁷ Gwendolyn B. Saylor, *Have the Promises Failed? A Literary Analysis of 2 Baruch* (SBLDS 72; Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1984), 126-28; Christoph Münchow, *Ethik und Eschatologie: Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der frühjüdischen Apokalyptik mit einem Ausblick auf das Neue Testament* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 84.

⁷⁸ 7:17-25; 7:60-61; 8:55-62. See Wolfgang Harnisch, *Verhängnis und Verheissung der Geschichte: Untersuchungen zum Zeit- und Geschichtsverständnis im 4. Buch Ezra und in der syr. Baruch-apokalypse* (FRLANT 97; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969), 246; Münchow, *Ethik*, 84.

⁷⁹ Sanders (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 409-15) stresses this rigorous individualistic attitude in 4 Ezra. Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 138-40) stresses that judgment in 4 Ezra 7 is not determined by any social conflict or situation of persecution. See especially 4 Ezra 7:35, 75-101, 104-105; 8:33, 38.

The apocalypse preserved in Syriac called 2 *Baruch* is similar in date, situation, and perspective to 4 Ezra.⁸⁰ Although 2 *Baruch* makes more varied use of judgment language than does 4 Ezra, the central thrust is similar: the fate of the individual in the future judgment is measured by actual obedience to the Torah.⁸¹ Every individual bears his or her own responsibility for the recompense to be received,⁸² regardless of one's position within Israel.⁸³ The works of each individual are recorded, will be revealed, and will lead to reward in the coming world (14:12; 24:1; 30:1-5) or to punishment (44:15; 59:2; 83:6-8; 85:9, 12-15).

The fourth book of the *Sibylline Oracles* in its present form also seems to be a Jewish work from the end of the first century C.E.⁸⁴ Here also the conception is of an individual moral judgment--the pious will be restored to a blessed life while the impious will receive punishment in fire (4.40-48). There is no mention of any conflict or crisis to be resolved by this judgment. The picture simply serves to undergird moral exhortation.⁸⁵

The date of the composition of the portion of 1 *Enoch* known as the "Similitudes" or "Parables" (chapters 37-71) is, of course, hotly contested by scholars. But in view of the fact that only this section of 1 *Enoch* is not represented among Qumran manuscript finds,⁸⁶ the burden of proof would seem to be on those who would date these chapters prior to 70 C.E.⁸⁷ Just as confusing as the dating of this section is the question

⁸⁰ Saylor, *Have the Promises Failed?*, 38, 110, 117. James H. Charlesworth, *The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, with a Supplement* (SBLSCS 75; Scholars Press, 1981), 84. (Hereafter abbreviated PMR) George W. E. Nickelsburg Jr., *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 267-68, 287.

⁸¹ Saylor, *Have the Promises Failed?*, 30 and 32. See 48:47 and 51:1-7.

⁸² 48:38-40; 54:14-22. Münchow, *Ethik*, 104-105 and 111. Saylor (*Have the Promises Failed?*, 32 and 63) takes 48:29-47 as an eschatological judgment against the nations; but, as she admits, this focus is not explicit, and in any case it is individual responsibility that is stressed.

⁸³ Saylor, *Have the Promises Failed?*, 17 and 24. See 15:1-8 and chap. 41, where Israelites and gentile proselytes are weighed in the scales of judgment.

⁸⁴ John J. Collins in *OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 381-82. The sections which are our concern here are, according to Collins, the composition of the redactor, although he expresses some doubt about 4.173-92. Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 140-41) treats 4.176-91 as a work contemporary with 4 Ezra.

⁸⁵ 4.183-90. See Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 140-41.

⁸⁶ See the table in George W. E. Nickelsburg Jr., "Enoch, Book of," *IDBSup*, 266.

⁸⁷ Sanders (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 347-48) accepts a post-Christian date as likely. Collins (*Apocalyptic Imagination*, 143) accepts a date in the early or mid first century C.E. Others place it in the last quarter of the first century C.E.: Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. - A.D. 135)*, vol. 3, part 1 (new English version revised and edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, Martin Goodman; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), 259. Nickelsburg, on the other hand, (*Jewish Literature*, 221-23) dates the Similitudes around the turn of the era.

of the function of judgment language, even though judgment seems to be the major theme of the whole booklet. Although the judgment of the elect/holy/righteous and the sinners/wicked is constantly mentioned, their respective identities and what precisely distinguishes them from each other is left unclear.⁸⁸ There is also frequent mention of the judgment of kings and the powerful, who are said to have denied the Lord and oppressed his people.⁸⁹ These rulers are associated with the evil angels, who are also subject to God's condemnation.⁹⁰ Yet one gets the sense that these rulers are rather stereotyped characters and not the perpetrators of an actual crisis facing God's people. Therefore, it is likely that eschatological judgment in the Similitudes serves to undergird the author's argument that an individual's actions will receive proper ultimate recompense. Judgment in this work does not really function to resolve a crisis or to bolster a group's identity.⁹¹ This conclusion is supported by two passages in which the "weighing" of actions of individuals is mentioned (41:1 and 61:8-9). Oddly, in neither case does this weighing have any clear function.⁹² The statement in 61:8-9 is particularly interesting because it is one of the very rare texts in Jewish literature in which the weighing and judgment take place within the group of the holy ones:

And [the Elect One] shall judge all the works of the holy ones in heaven above, weighing in the balance their deeds. And when he shall lift up his countenance in order to judge the secret ways of theirs . . . and their conduct . . . then they shall all speak with one voice, blessing, glorifying, extolling, sanctifying the name of the Lord of the Spirits.⁹³

Presumably, this weighing should lead to different levels of reward for the righteous, but such an idea is not explicitly mentioned.

Also in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* the conception of a recompensing judgment of individuals serves a general parenetic purpose.⁹⁴ The most extensive late witnesses of the development of an

⁸⁸ See 38:1-6; 41:2; 45:1-6; 51:1-2; 53:2; 60:6. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 348.

⁸⁹ 38:5-6; 47:1-4; 48:8; 50:1-5; 54:1-6; 55:3-4; 62:3, 9-13; 63:8.

⁹⁰ 54:1-6; 55:3-4; 68:5.

⁹¹ I disagree here with Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 70-75, 85-86), who sees *1 Enoch* 46 and 62-63 as concerned with the persecuted righteous. Collins (*Apocalyptic Imagination*, 153) says that the Similitudes do not reflect any actual crisis but that they do fit any situation in which the righteous feel oppressed.

⁹² Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 165-66.

⁹³ Translation by E. Isaac in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 42.

⁹⁴ *T. Benj.* 10:7-11, which has some Christian elements; *T. Reuben* 5:5; *T. Levi* 3:2-3; 4:11; 15:2; *T. Zebulun* 10:3; *T. Gad* 7:5; *T. Benjamin* 7:5.

individualistic function of judgment are two closely related texts, the *Testament of Abraham* and 2 *Enoch*. These will be examined in more detail below.

The rabbinic writings of the Tannaitic period also show that eschatological judgment language could become almost completely detached from contexts of crisis or conflict and be used as grounding for ethical admonition.⁹⁵ The rabbis certainly held to the belief in the corporate salvation of those who remained faithful in Israel, as is indicated in the opening line of *m. Sanh.* 10:1: "All Israelites have a share in the world to come."⁹⁶ But as the rest of this chapter also shows, various sorts of disbelief and sin will result in a judgment of condemnation, thus making individual distinctions within Israel. It is regarded as essential not to lose belief in retribution.⁹⁷ The aspect of individual recompense comes out most clearly in frequent assertions that reward will vary according to the service performed, as in *m. Abot* 2:16:

If thou hast studied much in the Law much reward will be given thee, and faithful is thy taskmaster who shall pay thee the reward of thy labour. And know that the recompense of the reward of the righteous is for the time to come.⁹⁸

Later, we also hear of Rabbi Johannon ben Zakkai at the point of death speak of the "two ways" before him—one to Paradise, the other to Gehinnom.⁹⁹ Also worthy of note is a tradition that all people are divided into three groups at the day of judgment—the thoroughly righteous, the thoroughly unrighteous, and the intermediate. In a debate between the houses of Hillel and Shammai about this intermediate group, Shammai holds that these will suffer a temporary purgation in the fires of Gehinnom before they rise again to Paradise.¹⁰⁰ As a whole, we see that for

⁹⁵ Anthony J. Saldarini, "The Uses of Apocalyptic in the Mishna and Tosepta," *CBQ* 39 (1977), 406-407; Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 50-67. Sanders (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 117, 125-28) correctly points out that there is still in the rabbis a corporate sense of the salvation of Israel; reward and punishment in the world to come are seen as taking place *within* the realm of salvation. But Sanders is in danger of imposing his own systematic pattern on the diverse rabbinic recompense language.

⁹⁶ Translation by Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1933), 397. See also *m. Abot* 5:19.

⁹⁷ *m. Abot* 1:7; 4:11; *Targum Neofiti* on Gen 4:7-8.

⁹⁸ Translation by Danby, *Mishnah*, 43. See also 2:14 and 4:10.

⁹⁹ *b. Berakot* 28b; *Abot de Rabbi Nathan A*, chap. 25.

¹⁰⁰ *t. Sanhedrin* 13:3; *b. Roš Haššana* 16b-17a; *Abot de Rabbi Nathan A*, chap. 41. On this tradition see Saldarini, "Uses of Apocalyptic," 400; Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 142-43; John T. Townsend, "I Corinthians 3:15 and the School of Shammai," *HTR* 61 (1968), 500-504. *m. Eduyyot* 2:10 also speaks of a temporary judgment of the unrighteous in Gehenna.

the rabbis the future judgment functions as the ultimate individual moral recompense.

In summary, we see that the language of individual moral recompense continues to serve a parenetic function from the OT all the way through rabbinic Judaism. Yet the shift of this recompense to the level of a final or postmortem judgment is a relatively late development in our sources, mostly evident after 70 C.E. We should not necessarily conclude that people in the second temple period had no conception of an eschatological moral recompense of individuals. What is clear is that prior to the middle of the first century C.E. eschatological judgment language was used in Jewish writings mainly to address situations of crisis, conflict, or threat to a group's identity (see below) but not often to back up general moral exhortation.

Appeals to the Higher Court of God's Judgment

Another category of judgment language in the OT was the appeal to the higher court of God's judgment in situations of personal or group litigation or conflict. In the OT it was assumed that such judgments would take place within the course of normal life. We find the same to be true of the sporadic uses of judgment language with this function in Judaism after the OT. An appeal to God's judgment can be used as justification for taking vengeance with one's own hands (2 Macc 12:6). More often an appeal is made for God himself to act to resolve a conflict. In Judith 7:24 the people complain against their leaders, "God be judge between you and us!"¹⁰¹ Philo (*Congr.* 153) interprets Sarah's appeal to God against Abraham in Gen 16:5 as a proper recognition of her inability to know the intentions of Abraham's heart. Josephus (*Antiquities* 6.289 and 318) likewise interprets David's appeals to God in his conflict with Saul (1 Kgdms 24:13, 16) as appeals to the only one who can correctly determine the motives and character of each. In *Joseph and Aseneth* 28:8 Aseneth says to the brothers who had plotted against her and Joseph: "Besides, the Lord will judge between me and you."¹⁰²

As in the OT, there is a clear function in many of these appeals of deferring to God's judgment so that one can refrain from taking action on one's own. In Josephus (*Antiquities* 7.199) David flees from Absalom and "committed the entire matter into the hands of God as judge."¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Translation according to the RSV.

¹⁰² Translation by C. Burchard in *OTP*, vol. 2, p. 246.

¹⁰³ Translation by H. St. J. Thackeray and Ralph Marcus in *Josephus* (LCL, vol. 5), 465-67. There is no OT parallel for this statement. See also *Antiquities* 7.209.

This attitude is expressed directly in the precept "leave vengeance to God."¹⁰⁴ In *Antiquities* 4.33 Moses urges Korah to stop his seditious grasping for the priesthood and "leave the judgment to God."¹⁰⁵ A little further on Moses calls on God to take vengeance on his opponents Dathan and Abiram and thus confirm that he himself is innocent of self-interest and favoritism in his leadership (*Antiquities* 4.41-50). At times the appeal functions as an oath, with God asked to attest the innocence of the supplicant.¹⁰⁶ Such an oath serves as the only text in this category in which the appeal is made to the eschatological judgment of God, in the second century C.E. 3 *Baruch* 1:7: "May God add to me punishment on the Day of Judgment if I speak in the future."¹⁰⁷ It seems clear that this function of judgment language as an appeal to the higher court of God's judgment does not develop beyond its contours in the Old Testament.

Eschatological Judgment Addressed To Situations of Crisis and Conflict

We saw in the OT a number of prophetic texts in which God's judgment served to promise vindication to Israel over its enemies or to a group within Israel over its opponents. In some of these texts were the first glimpses of a conception of an eschatological judgment. It is this function of judgment language to advance the identity of a group in the face of conflict, crisis, and threats which proves to be most prominent in Judaism in hellenistic and early Roman times.

Occasionally God's judgment is seen as an historical act of vengeance against an enemy of Israel.¹⁰⁸ More often, however, God's punishing judgment occurs as a final act of vengeance to end history, as in *Judith* 16:17. In a narrative context such an eternal judgment can be directed against an individual enemy.¹⁰⁹ This can be coupled with the notion of eternal life for the persecuted righteous.¹¹⁰ But more often God's judgment is seen as a corporate judgment on the Gentiles or apostate Jews. This is the function of the frequent references to divine judgment in *Jubilees*, where judgment is always a condemnation of

¹⁰⁴ *T. Gad* 6:7.

¹⁰⁵ Translation by H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus* (LCL, vol. 4), 491.

¹⁰⁶ 1 Macc 2:37; Pseudo-Philo, *Bib. Ant.* 22:3-7 (interpreting Josh 22:21-23).

¹⁰⁷ Translation by H. E. Gaylord, Jr., in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 663. The Slavonic version is slightly different.

¹⁰⁸ 1 Macc 7:42; 2 Macc 4:38; 8:33; 9:4, 18.

¹⁰⁹ 2 Macc 7:35-36; 4 Macc 9:9, 32; 10:11; 12:12; 13:15; 18:5. On the 4 Maccabees passages see Fischer, *Eschatologie*, 89-90.

¹¹⁰ 2 Macc 7:35-36; 12:41; 4 Macc 9:8.

Gentiles or those Jews who live like them.¹¹¹ A peculiar motif in *Jubilees* is the heavenly books on which many sorts of information are recorded. When these books are connected with judgment it is not an individual's deeds which are recorded, however. Rather, the books tell simply whether the person is loyal to God's covenant, as in 30:21-22.¹¹² For faithful Israel the favorable judgment means a lasting restoration of Zion (1:29). Thus even in a passage in which the judgment of every individual is repeatedly emphasized, such as 5:10-16, it is clear that the individual will stand and be judged on the basis of his or her corporate allegiance. So all of the judgment language in *Jubilees* arises from the need to maintain and encourage the distinctive identity of Israel in the face of Gentile pressure and internal defections, probably in the time of the Maccabean crisis.¹¹³

Many other texts from the second temple period use eschatological judgment as a means to affirm the identity of Israel over against the nations. For example, in Book 3 of the *Sibylline Oracles* judgment is to come against Gentile idolaters (3.34-35, 601-634) or Rome (3.51-62) or Greece (3.556-557).¹¹⁴ There is no hint of any individual moral judgment.¹¹⁵ The *Testament of Moses* (Assumption of Moses) also uses divine judgment to affirm the ultimate vindication of oppressed Israel (chapter 10).¹¹⁶ In the "Dream Visions" of *I Enoch* (chapters 83-90) the major focus of the judgment language is on the division within Israel between those loyal to the covenant and the apostates, who seem to be hellen-

¹¹¹ See especially 23:27-31. On this passage see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 31-33. Also Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 158; he notes correctly that the judgment here consists of a great reversal but not of a "last assize." See also James C. Vanderkam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (CBQMS 16; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1984), 267; Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 368. See also 9:15; 15:26, 33-34; 16:6; 21:4; 22:21-22; 24:30-33; 30:21-22.

¹¹² See also 4:23; 5:13-14; 10:17; 16:9; 19:9; 24:33; 28:6; 30:19-20; 31:32; 36:10; 39:6. On the books see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 366; Münchow, *Ethik*, 45-46.

¹¹³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 362, 366, 371-72; Gene L. Davenport, *The Eschatology of the Book of Jubilees* (SPB 20; Leiden: Brill, 1971), 72-73; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 67.

¹¹⁴ This book is probably a hellenistic Jewish work from Egypt, with various stages of composition between the second and first centuries B.C.E. See John J. Collins in *OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 354-55, 359-61; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 162 and 164. Other judgment passages are in 3.84-87, 669-709, 741-61, 767-95.

¹¹⁵ John J. Collins, *The Sibylline Oracles of Egyptian Judaism* (SBLDS 13; Missoula: SBL, 1974), 110.

¹¹⁶ This work probably dates from the early first century C.E. or earlier. Charlesworth, *PMR*, 163-64; J. Priest in *OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 920-21; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 103; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 43-45.

izers.¹¹⁷ As in *Jubilees*, heavenly books are utilized in this vision of judgment as the means of prosecuting the wicked leaders.¹¹⁸ Also in the addendum to *1 Enoch*, chapter 108, final judgment is seen as the vindication of the persecuted righteous.¹¹⁹ Finally, the *Testament of Judah* 25:3-5 speaks of future life for the persecuted and grief for the ungodly.

This corporate function of final judgment is not limited to texts of the second temple period. The late first century C.E. *Apocalypse of Abraham*¹²⁰ uses judgment language to divide all people into the oppressing heathen nations and God's own faithful people.¹²¹ Although in *2 Baruch* the dominant use of judgment is as individual moral recompense, it also contains some passages which retain the corporate perspective of the vindication of Israel against the Gentile oppressors.¹²² The same is true of 4 Ezra, where in the fifth vision (the Eagle Vision), the Messiah will destroy the eagle and deliver the remnant of Israel (12:31-34). In the sixth vision a similar judgment on the ungodly nations is foretold (13:35-38). The late second century C.E. Jewish portion of *Sibylline Oracles*, Book 8, similarly envisions a judgment of the Romans (8.81-109).¹²³

We saw that in the OT the first appeals to an eschatological judgment of God arose only in situations in which the people of God or a remnant of them saw themselves in defeat, crisis, with their identity threatened. After the OT it is the turbulent times which Judaism went through in the hellenistic and early Roman periods which continued to call forth the appeal to final judgment, in order to encourage loyalty and hope in the face of threats from outside pressure and internal defections. To be sure, judgment texts which thus serve to define and solidify group identity are not unaware of the moral dimension of judgment; the influence of moral recompense language is clear above all in the constant contrast between the fate of the righteous and the wicked. Nevertheless, the dominant focus of judgment in these texts is not on individual morality

¹¹⁷ This work is most likely from Maccabean times. So Vanderkam, *Enoch*, 161-63; and Charlesworth, *PMR*, 99. On the function of judgment language see Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 92-93; Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 351.

¹¹⁸ 89:62-64, 68, 70-71, 76-77; 90:17; and especially 90:20-27.

¹¹⁹ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 86-87.

¹²⁰ Charlesworth, *PMR*, 68-69; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 298-99.

¹²¹ 24:1-9; 28:4; 31:1-8. See Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 175. Chap. 29 also speaks of judgment on the heathen nations, but this is most likely a Christian interpolation, according to Charlesworth (*PMR*, 69) and Rubinkiewicz (*OTP*, vol. 1, p. 684).

¹²² 11:1-3; 12:4; 13:2-12; 40:1-4; 72:6; 82:3-9. On 82:3-9 see Saylor, *Have the Promises Failed?*, 98-101. Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 84-85) finds evidence of judgment as vindication of the persecuted righteous in *2 Baruch* 49-51.

¹²³ For the date see Collins in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 416.

but rather on the cohesiveness of the religious group in the face of crisis, conflict, and threat.

Motifs Connected With Judgment in Jewish Texts

As in the OT, later Jewish texts continue to use the word "day" to emphasize the planned and decisive nature of coming divine judgment. Various expressions are used: "day of the Elect One" (1 *Enoch* 61:5); "day of the Mighty One" (2 *Baruch* 55:6); "your day" (2 *Baruch* 48:47; 49:2); "the time of his day" (4 *Ezra* 13:52). But mostly we find the "day of judgment"¹²⁴ or simply "that day"¹²⁵ or "day of tribulation and pain" (1 *Enoch* 55:3) and similar expressions (1 *Enoch* 48:8, 10; 50:2). Sometimes "day of judgment" becomes such a fixed designation for the end of history that it can be used as a reference to the end of time without any real description of divine judgment.¹²⁶ Thus we see an increasing adherence to the conception of a final judgment in Judaism, regardless of the function which this conception served in different contexts.

Not surprisingly, most judgment texts place more emphasis on the negative side than the positive, so much so that "judgment" is often synonymous with "condemnation." Nevertheless, the concept of reward (μισθός in Greek and related words and phrases) does occur with some frequency. Rarely is "reward" used in the ironic negative sense of "just deserts."¹²⁷ The concept of reward can refer to positive recompense from God in this world.¹²⁸ More often, however, Jewish texts after the OT mention "reward" and similar concepts in connection with final judgment. In very many texts, even those late texts in which judgment functions as an individual moral recompense, the reward is simply the opposite of condemnation, equivalent to salvation.¹²⁹ Even in 2 *Baruch* 15:8, where it is said that the righteous will receive "a crown with great

¹²⁴ *Judith* 16:17; *Jubilees* 5:10; 9:15; 24:30, 33; *Psalms of Solomon* 15:12; 1 *Enoch* 54:6; 62:3; 84:4; 94:9; 96:8; 97:3, 5; 98:8, 10; 99:15; 100:4; 104:5; 4 *Ezra* 7:38, 102, 104, 113; 12:34; 2 *Baruch* 59:8; *T. Levi* 3:2-3.

¹²⁵ 1 *Enoch* 62:13; 45:3; 51:2; 60:6; *Sib. Or.* 3.55, 741.

¹²⁶ *Jubilees* 4:19; *Life of Adam and Eve*, *Apocalypse* 26:4; 37:5; *Life of Adam and Eve*, *Vita* 47:3; *T. Levi* 1:1.

¹²⁷ I can find only 2 *Macc* 8:33.

¹²⁸ *Tobit* 4:14; *Josephus Antiquities* 1.183 (with reference to *Gen* 15:1); 18.309; *Philo Leg. All.* 1.80 (with reference to *Gen* 30:18); see also *Philo Ebr.* 94; *Som.* 2.34 and 38; *Plant.* 134.

¹²⁹ 2 *Macc* 12:41; 4 *Ezra* 7:83; 8:33, 39; 13:56; 2 *Baruch* 52:7; 54:16; 59:2. See Mattem, *Verständnis des Gerichtes*, 32-35. She examines the question of varying rewards in the apocalypses and comes to negative conclusions.

glory,"¹³⁰ there is no hint that this crown is anything beyond simple salvation. Also in rabbinic texts "reward" (usually *škr*—"pay" or "wages") many times is simply equivalent to salvation.¹³¹

There are some texts, however, which seem to suggest that future rewards will vary in quality or quantity. As we would expect, these references all are found in the later texts which see judgment as moral recompense for individuals. The suggestion of varying rewards in these texts, however, is never very explicit or highly developed. For example, in the *Biblical Antiquities* of Pseudo-Philo 64:7 Samuel, upon being conjured up from the dead, says: "I thought that the time for being rendered the rewards of my deeds had arrived."¹³² Are we to infer from the plural "rewards" that some people can have more, others less? In the "Similitudes" of *1 Enoch* 50:1-5 it appears that there is a third group between the righteous and the unrepentant; these will repent and be saved, but, "there shall not be honor unto them in the name of the Lord of the Spirits."¹³³ Some texts speak of a treasury of works laid up with God, but there is no explicit consequence of varying rewards drawn from this.¹³⁴ In 4 Ezra 7:88-98 seven "orders" of rest and blessing for the faithful are described; these are in ascending order of greatness, but they seem to be levels of reward which all the righteous together will experience. It is in a number of rabbinic passages from the Mishnah tractate *ʾAbot* where degrees of reward for individuals are most clearly promised. For example, it is said that for much study of Torah, much reward will be given (2:16).¹³⁵ We can conclude that the idea of God granting rewards of differing degrees in the final judgment was not unknown, at least after 70 C.E., but even then there was a certain reticence in most quarters about such a conception.¹³⁶

A final motif to consider is one which was already in frequent use in connection with judgment language in the OT: God's knowledge of all human thoughts and actions. This idea can be expressed in a number of ways, but I will be concerned more with the variety of functions than

¹³⁰ Translation by A. F. J. Klijn in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 626.

¹³¹ On the whole concept see Morton Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels* (JBL Monograph Series 6; Philadelphia: SBL, 1951), 49-77, with an English translation of texts on pages 163-84. See especially the *Eighteen Benedictions* 13 (Smith's #1); *Mekilta* 16:13 (Smith's #13); *t. Hullin* 10:16 (Smith's #103).

¹³² Translation by D. J. Harrington in *OTP*, vol. 2, p. 377.

¹³³ Translation by E. Isaac in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 36.

¹³⁴ 4 Ezra 7:77; 8:33; 2 Baruch 14:12; 24:1.

¹³⁵ See also 2:1; 4:10; 5:23. See Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels*, 61-62.

¹³⁶ Paul Volz (*Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* [Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1934], 404-405) discusses a number of texts which may have a conception of varying degrees of reward, but none outside of rabbinic texts are unambiguous.

with the expressions used. The belief in God's omniscience, of course, can be used in ways unrelated to judgment or moral exhortation.¹³⁷ It can be used in a claim of innocence (Susanna 42 [Theodotion]). Many times the concept is used in moral exhortation without any explicit mention of divine judgment or recompense.¹³⁸

More often, God's knowledge of all actions and thoughts is seen as the basis for divine recompense in this life. In 2 Macc 12:41 Jewish soldiers who had literally hidden idols under their clothes are killed in battle, since the Lord is "the righteous Judge, who reveals the things that are hidden."¹³⁹ Philo in *Migr. Abr.* 115 explains that God condemned Balaam, even though he uttered blessings on Israel, because God saw beneath this outward appearance:

But He Who looks upon what is stored up in the soul, saw, with the Eye that alone has power to discern them, the things that are out of sight of created beings, and on the ground of these passed the sentence of condemnation, being at once an absolutely true Witness, and an incorruptible Judge.¹⁴⁰

It is probably no accident that this conception is so prominent in texts from hellenistic Judaism; the connection of divine omniscience with moral recompense is common in Greek tradition (see the next chapter). The coherence of Greek and Jewish conceptions on this point is illustrated by some hellenistic Jewish poetic fragments preserved under the names of Greek poets, for example:

Covet not, O friend, even a needle's thread.
For God is nearby and is watching you.¹⁴¹

The idea of God's perfect knowledge can serve to undergird appeals to God's higher court of justice, for not only secret acts but also true motives can be judged accurately only by God. Philo in *Spec. Leg.* 3.52 interprets the institution of the ordeal for the suspected adulteress in Num 5:11-31 with the words:

¹³⁷ Often in connection with divine providence, for example, Philo *Fug.* 136; *Op. Mund.* 69; *T. Naphthali* 2:4-5.

¹³⁸ *Epistle of Aristeeas* 189, 210; Philo *Leg. All.* 3.43; *Cher.* 16-17; *Fug.* 160; *Abr.* 104; Josephus *Apionem* 2.166; *Jewish War* 5.413; *Antiquities* 4.285-86; 6.263; 9.3; *T. Benjamin* 6:6.

¹³⁹ Translation according to the RSV.

¹⁴⁰ Translation by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker in *Philo* (LCL, vol. 4), 199. Similar statements are found in *Epistle of Aristeeas* 131-33; Philo *Som.* 1.90-91; Josephus *Antiquities* 1.20; 2.23-24; *Jewish War* 1.630; *T. Judah* 20:3-5; *T. Zebulon* 5:2; *T. Gad* 5:3.

¹⁴¹ Translation by Attridge in *OTP*, vol. 2, p. 830. See also the fragments on pp. 828-29.

For men can arbitrate on open matters, but God on the hidden also, since He alone can see clearly into the soul.¹⁴²

In another text Philo interprets Num 15:30 in this way:

But with the men of windy pride, whose intensified arrogance sets them quite beyond cure, the law deals admirably in not bringing them to be judged by men but handing them over to the divine tribunal only, for it says, "Whosoever sets his hand to do anything with presumptuousness provokes God." Why is this? First, because arrogance is a vice of the soul and the soul is invisible save only to God.¹⁴³

Philo recognizes here that some vices cannot be accurately evaluated without a knowledge of the person's inner thoughts. In such cases human judgment is inappropriate, and one must defer to God's higher court.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, Josephus, in describing the appeals to God the judge by Moses and David, bases those appeals on God's knowledge of motives.¹⁴⁵ In short, God can serve as a court of higher appeal not only because of his perfect justice, but also because only divine omniscience can be aware of all of the relevant evidence, especially of motives.

The motif of God's knowledge of human actions and thoughts is carried through also into contexts which speak of an eschatological judgment. Occasionally the idea serves as the basis for God's judgment of enemies and vindication of the righteous.¹⁴⁶ More frequent, however, is the use of the omniscience motif in connection with the final moral recompense of individuals. These texts are all to be dated after 70 C.E., and it is worthy of note that many of them refer not just to God's complete knowledge of human hearts and ways, but to an actual process of disclosure which will take place at the time of judgment.¹⁴⁷ So in 4 Ezra 14:35 we are told:

For after death the judgment will come, when we shall live again; and then the names of the righteous will become manifest, and the deeds of the ungodly will be disclosed.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴² Translation by F. H. Colson, *Philo* (LCL, vol. 7), 509.

¹⁴³ *Virt.* 171-72; translation by F. H. Colson, *Philo* (LCL, vol. 8), 269.

¹⁴⁴ Philo has similar statements in *Congr.* 153; *Vit. Mos.* 2.217; *Spec. Leg.* 3.121.

¹⁴⁵ *Antiquities* 4.40-41, 46; 6.289, 318. See also Pseudo-Philo, *Bib. Ant.* 22:3-4, 6-7; 50:4.

¹⁴⁶ 2 Macc 6:26, 30; 7:35; *Psalms of Solomon* 8:8; 9:3; 14:8; 17:25; 1 Enoch 9:5, 11; 84:3-4; Wisdom of Solomon 6:3.

¹⁴⁷ The apparent contradiction between God's omniscience and the need for disclosure does not seem to be noticed in these texts.

¹⁴⁸ Translation by Bruce M. Metzger in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 554.

Or in 2 *Baruch* 48:39 fire is the agent of examination:

Therefore, a fire will consume their thoughts, and with a flame the meditations of their kidneys will be examined.¹⁴⁹

Again, 2 *Baruch* 83:2-3 stresses this process of disclosure:

And he will surely judge those who are in his world, and will truly inquire into everything with regard to all their works which were sins [or, which were hidden]. He will certainly investigate the secret thoughts and everything which is lying in the inner chambers of all their members which are in sin. And he will make them manifest in the presence of everyone with blame.¹⁵⁰

If each person is to be judged on the basis of his or her individual life it is important that this life be completely disclosed so that the proper recompense can be administered.

This ends our overview of the functions of divine judgment in Jewish texts after the OT. It should at least have demonstrated the validity of the proposed functional categories and given some sense of the chronological distribution of the use of these categories of judgment language. I can now turn to a more detailed analysis of a few selected texts. This will serve both to test my typology of the functions and to enable a more precise delineation of how divine judgment was used in particular human situations.

3. Analysis of Judgment Language in Selected Jewish Texts

1 *Enoch* 1-36

Chapters 1-36 of 1 *Enoch* (The Book of Watchers) are generally considered to be a literary unit, although this unit may itself have gone through various stages of composition.¹⁵¹ These chapters are held to be

¹⁴⁹ Translation by A. F. J. Klijn in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 637.

¹⁵⁰ Translation by Klijn in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 649. See also 19:3 and 24:1. The Similitudes of 1 *Enoch* also use this motif: 49:4; 61:8-9; 63:3. It is also an essential component of the judgment apparatus in the *Testament of Abraham* and 2 *Enoch* (see below for details). A related motif is that of the keeping of books in heaven and opening them at the judgment (see Daniel 7:10): *Jubilees* 4:23; 5:13-14; 10:17; 16:9; 19:9; 24:33; 28:6; 30:19-22; 31:32; 36:10; 39:6; 1 *Enoch* 47:3; 89:62-64, 70-71, 76-77; 90:17; 98:6-8; 104:7. In the Qumran documents: CD 20:19-20; 1QH 1:23-25. Also 4 Ezra 6:20; 2 *Baruch* 24:1; *T. Asher* 7:5; *m. 'Abot* 2:1. On this motif see Volz, *Eschatologie*, 290-92.

¹⁵¹ John J. Collins, "The Apocalyptic Technique: Setting and Function in the Book of Watchers," *CBQ* 44 (1982), 94-95; Vanderkam, *Enoch*, 110; E. Isaac in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 5; Michael E. Stone, "The Book of Enoch and Judaism in the Third Century B.C.E.,"

one of the earliest parts of *1 Enoch*, almost certainly pre-Maccabean.¹⁵² The first section, chapters 1-5, introduces the book by setting forth a theme which will run throughout—the distinction between the elect/righteous and the ungodly/wicked. This distinction is confirmed by God's judgment on the "day of tribulation" (1:1), described in the terms of a theophany (1:3-9).¹⁵³ The picture of reward and punishment is expanded in 5:5-10 with the threat of a curse and "eternal execration" for the wicked and "light, joy, and peace" to the elect. The crucial question is: who are the righteous and the ungodly? What point is being made by the prediction of their separation in an eschatological judgment?

Chapters 6-16 contain the story of the Watchers, the "fallen angels" of Gen 6:1-4. Chapters 6-11 tell the story of the Watchers with an emphasis on the crisis on earth which results from the angels' sin, with "much blood being shed" and "all the oppression being wrought upon the earth" (9:1). This crisis prompts the people to cry to God for judgment (9:3-11), backed up by an appeal to the omniscience of God (9:5, 11). Judgment on the angels is proclaimed (10:6), and they are bound until the final judgment (10:12), a judgment which will include their human collaborators (10:14). Then follows a time of blessing for the righteous on a renewed earth.¹⁵⁴ The description of the oppression caused by the Watchers, the cry of the righteous, and their ultimate vindication all seem to be a symbolic representation of some perceived crisis.¹⁵⁵ The historical situation is transposed to a mythic level, where it can be resolved by the imaginative vision of judgment. Chapters 12-16 introduce Enoch and provide a transition to his revelatory journeys. Enoch

CBQ 40 (1978), 486. Some consider chaps. 1-5 to be the work of the final redactor of *1 Enoch*, for example, Russell, *Method and Message*, 51-52.

¹⁵² Once this booklet was often dated in the second century B.C.E., as by Russell, *Method and Message*, 51-52. Now on the basis of Qumran Aramaic manuscripts most scholars would place it in the third century: Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 266-67; Stone, "The Book of *Enoch* and Judaism in the Third Century B.C.E.," 484; Vanderkam, *Enoch*, 111-114; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 48; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 33-34. The whole text is extant only in Ethiopic. Because it is readily accessible I cite the English translation by E. Isaac in *OTP*, vol. 1. I have checked the more recent critical edition and translation by Michael A. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1978). I have also checked, where extant, the Greek fragments (Matthew Black, "Apocalypsis Henochi Graece," in *Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece*, vol. 3 [Leiden: Brill, 1970], 1-44) and the Aramaic fragments (J. T. Milik with Matthew Black, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1976]).

¹⁵³ See Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 37; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 49.

¹⁵⁴ For an outline of the story see Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 49-52.

¹⁵⁵ Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 38-40. Nickelsburg (*Jewish Literature*, 51-52) suggests the wars of the Diadochi as the crisis. See also Collins, "The Apocalyptic Technique," 97-100.

is sent as a prophet to announce the judgment of doom on the evil Watchers (12:4-13:2; 14:4-5; 16:1).¹⁵⁶

The remainder of the book, chapters 17-36, is concerned with Enoch's journeys. The first journey, in chapters 17-19, serves to confirm again the certainty of the judgment already announced,¹⁵⁷ for Enoch sees "the prison house for the stars and the powers of heaven" (18:14). The journey concludes with a further repetition of the note of judgment (19:1-3).¹⁵⁸ Enoch's long second journey occupies chapters 21-36. Again, one of the central thrusts of this diverse material is to underscore the coming final judgment, by showing how the just judgment of God is already built into the structure of the cosmos.¹⁵⁹ Enoch sees the eternal "prison house of the angels" (21:10), the mountain in which the souls of the dead are kept until the judgment (chapter 22), the judgment throne of God (25:3), the tree of life for the righteous (25:4-6), and the accursed valley for the judgment of those who have blasphemed God (27:1-5).

All of this cosmic description is, strictly speaking, a pre-judgment scene. Yet the results of the final judgment are not left up in the air; the function of all this description is precisely to underscore the certainty of the just recompense to come. Two crucial questions arise from the scene in chapter 22: what are the identities of the different groups, and how do these divisions function within the whole of chapters 1-36? Chapter 22 is a description of the places where souls are kept until the judgment, where they already receive a foretaste of their fate in the judgment to come. At least three, and possibly four, groups are distinguished.¹⁶⁰ Verse 2 speaks of four "corners" or compartments (Greek: *τόποι*), but v. 9 states that there are three places for the separation of the spirits of the dead. In any case, three groups are clear: (1) the righteous (v. 9b), who are placed by a "spring of water with light upon

¹⁵⁶ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 52-54.

¹⁵⁷ Carol A. Newsom, "The Development of 1 Enoch 6-19: Cosmology and Judgment," CBQ 42 (1980), 323-28.

¹⁵⁸ Collins, "The Apocalyptic Technique," 103. This perhaps was the original conclusion of the book. So Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 54; Newsom, "Development of 1 Enoch 6-19," 312; Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 25.

¹⁵⁹ Vanderkam, *Enoch*, 140.

¹⁶⁰ See Vanderkam, *Enoch*, 140. Knibb (*The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, vol. 2, 110-11) argues convincingly for four groups. Sanders (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 350) opts for three groups. A detailed discussion and translation of 1 Enoch 22 is found in Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 134-37.

it''; (2) the wicked who have not received adequate recompense for their sins in their lifetime, who are kept in pain now in anticipation of the final judgment and recompense (vv. 10-11); (3) the wicked who will not be punished further on the day of judgment, probably because they have been adequately recompensed in their lifetime. Is there a fourth group? This depends on how one understands v. 12. Although this could be taken together with v. 13, it seems more likely that it does indeed describe a fourth group--those who were unjustly murdered in the days of the sinners. This interpretation is supported by the statements in vv. 5-7 that the spirit of the murdered Abel continues to plead for vengeance against the descendants of Cain. It is this concern for the victims of violence which ties this whole judgment scene most strongly to its context in chapters 1-36, especially the oppression and cry for vindication of chapter 9.

Nickelsburg downplays the theme of the persecuted righteous in this scene.¹⁶¹ He is right in saying that the author does not identify the righteous totally as those who are persecuted. Nevertheless, in its context in chapters 1-36 this scene serves as an answer to a perceived crisis of violence and oppression. What is addressed in this work is not simply a concern for proper individual postmortem recompense. This scene indicates that in *1 Enoch* 1-36, as Collins states, "The punishment of the Watchers is paradigmatic for human sinners."¹⁶² The vision of judgment is a response to a crisis of violence and corruption in the world. What specific historical crisis lies behind this vision is unclear; the consolation and encouragement which it offers may be applied in different situations of violence.¹⁶³ Unlike the judgment scene of Daniel 12:1-3, in *1 Enoch* 22 no clear opposing groups appear. What is bolstered by the vision of judgment is not group loyalty and identity. Rather, a situation of widespread violence and corruption threatens the people's confidence in an orderly and just world. The author sets forth a vision of a cosmic and eschatological judgment as the only means to restore the courage of the righteous in the face of such adversity.

¹⁶¹ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 136-37.

¹⁶² Collins, "The Apocalyptic Technique," 103.

¹⁶³ See Collins, "The Apocalyptic Technique," 108-111.

1 *Enoch* 92-105

There is general agreement that the fifth major section of *1 Enoch* is comprised of chapters 92-105,¹⁶⁴ that this section is a composite of various materials,¹⁶⁵ and that it dates from sometime in the second century B.C.E.¹⁶⁶ Fortunately, there are good recent studies on this section by George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr.,¹⁶⁷ and I can here merely highlight the points that are relevant to this study.¹⁶⁸

Nickelsburg identifies four forms which carry the message of this booklet. The first is the form of "woes," including the reason for the threat. The misdeeds described are often of a social nature (oppression) or of a religious nature (perverting the covenant).¹⁶⁹ For example, woes and descriptions of the greed, oppression, and faithlessness of the rich in 94:7-9 conclude with the threat of death and "the day of the great judgment." In 95:5 and 7 the language of equivalent recompense is used to speak against those who do evil to their neighbors and persecute the righteous.¹⁷⁰ The second form is the exhortation of the righteous, by envisioning either judgment for sinners or the future bliss of the righteous.¹⁷¹ The righteous who have experienced pain will be healed by the knowledge of the judgment of sinners and the promised rest for themselves (96:1, 3).¹⁷² The third form consists of descriptions of the future judgment, which vividly underscore the great reversal which was an-

¹⁶⁴ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 145. This booklet is often known as the "Epistle" from the self-designation in the Greek text of 100:6. Isaac (*OTP*, vol. 1, p. 5) and Russell (*Method and Message*, 51-52) prefer chaps. 91-104 as a unit. Charlesworth (*PMR*, 99) prefers chaps. 91-105; see also Vanderkam, *Enoch*, 141. The section of 91:1-10 seems to be a separate "Methuselah" apocalypse which speaks of God's eternal judgment against violence, oppression, and Gentile ways (see Vanderkam, *Enoch*, 170). The section in 91:11-17 has been misplaced in the Ethiopic version and belongs to the "Apocalypse of Weeks" after 93:1-10.

¹⁶⁵ The "Apocalypse of Weeks" in 93:1-10 and 91:11-17 is generally agreed to be a separate composition, but perhaps by the same author as the "Epistle." On it see Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 49-52; Vanderkam, *Enoch*, 145-60.

¹⁶⁶ Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 266-67. Vanderkam (*Enoch*, 142-49, 171) wants to make the whole Epistle pre-Maccabean. Nickelsburg (*Resurrection*, 113) suggests around 100 B.C.E., but later (*Jewish Literature*, 149-50) he expresses some doubt on the date and thinks it may be earlier. Collins (*Apocalyptic Imagination*, 53) very tentatively suggests a date before 150 B.C.E.

¹⁶⁷ First in *Resurrection*, 112-130. Later in "The Apocalyptic Message of 1 Enoch 92-105," CBQ 39 (1977), 309-328. See also "Riches, the Rich, and God's Judgment in 1 Enoch 92-105 and the Gospel according to Luke," NTS 25 (1978-79), 324-44.

¹⁶⁸ I cite once again the English translation by Isaac in *OTP*, vol. 1. I have also checked the Greek and Aramaic fragments.

¹⁶⁹ Nickelsburg, "The Apocalyptic Message of 1 Enoch 92-105," 310-11.

¹⁷⁰ See also 95:4, 6; 96:4-8; 97:7-8; 98:9-16; 99:1-2, 11-15; 100:7-9; 103:5.

¹⁷¹ Nickelsburg, "The Apocalyptic Message of 1 Enoch 92-105," 312.

¹⁷² See also 94:1-5; 95:3; 97:1-2.

nounced in the woes and exhortations.¹⁷³ The fourth form is the "Apocalypse of Weeks" in 93:1-10 and 91:11-17, in which once again divine judgment is the dominant motif.¹⁷⁴ In the eighth week (91:12-13) occurs a judgment by the righteous on their oppressors, in the ninth week (91:14) a judgment over the whole world, in the tenth week the final eternal judgment (91:15-16).

Two points are clear. First, the situation presupposed is one of social conflict between the wealthy oppressors who follow Gentile ways and the righteous oppressed. Second, the tensions and failed expectations raised in the righteous by the social situation are to be resolved primarily by looking to the great reversal, the future judgment. The desired result of this vision of judgment is a renewed courage and perseverance by the faithful in their present situation.¹⁷⁵ This becomes clear in the climax of the booklet, chapters 102-104. Here the sinners deny future retribution (102:6-8), the righteous lament their unjust lot (103:9-15), and Enoch repeatedly swears to them that there will be judgment and reversal, for so he has seen it written in heaven (103:1-4; 104:1-3). Divine omniscience, symbolized by the heavenly books, guarantees that the future judgment will be thorough and just.¹⁷⁶

Who are these opposing groups? The wicked seem to include Gentiles (see 99:7), but mostly in mind are Jews who are rich and powerful, follow pagan practices and forget God (at least as the author sees it), and have no use for a belief in a future recompense.¹⁷⁷ The righteous seem not to be a particular sectarian group, for there is no mention of community life or of particular sectarian practices. Thus it is not so much group identity which is at issue here as it is simply a concern to provide encouragement to a social and religious class of people—the righteous common people of the land.

The Psalms of Solomon

The poems known as the *Psalms of Solomon* date from the middle of the first century B.C.E. and are quite certainly Palestinian.¹⁷⁸ Although they were once thought to stem from the Pharisees, this connection is

¹⁷³ See especially 100:1-6; 102:1-4. Nickelsburg, "The Apocalyptic Message of 1 Enoch 92-105," 312-13.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 313.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 320, 323, 326. See also Münchow, *Ethik*, 39 and 42.

¹⁷⁶ 97:2, 6-7; 98:6-8; 100:10; 103:2-3; 104:1, 3, 7. See also 81:1-4.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 353, 358-59. For their denial of a future recompense see 102:6-8.

¹⁷⁸ Charlesworth, *PMR*, 195; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 203. I cite the translation of R. B. Wright in *OTP*, vol. 2. For the Greek text I use the edition of Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*.

now called into question.¹⁷⁹ Although they were not composed by a single author, they all appear to share the same viewpoint.¹⁸⁰ The first thing to note is that in these psalms God's recompensing judgment can be seen as taking place within history. For example, Psalm 2 sees the profaning of Jerusalem by Pompey as a judgment of God for the actions of lawless Jews.¹⁸¹ In both Psalms 13 and 15 the judgment is that sinners suffer violent deaths, from which the righteous are preserved. But then an eternal judgment follows. Future judgment is a frequent theme in these psalms,¹⁸² but often the hymnic style of praise for God the righteous judge results in some vagueness about whether the judgment is historical or eschatological.¹⁸³

In any case, the judgment of God always serves to distinguish the righteous from the sinners. Actually, there seem to be three groups: (1) the righteous, who see themselves as faithful but powerless Jews; (2) Gentiles, who are largely identified as the Romans under Pompey (2:22-25); (3) the sinners, who are lawless, apostate Jews. Most of the author's attention is fixed on this third group.¹⁸⁴ Although a few passages lay great stress on a recompense of individuals (5:4; 9:5), it is clear that this is a this-worldly recompense, and the dominant motif of eschatological judgment is directed primarily against the apostate Jews as a group.

Once again, the motif of God's knowledge plays a role in these psalms. God exposed the sins of wicked Israelites in the past (8:8), and God will continue to see clearly both evildoers and the righteous (9:3), and this knowledge will lead to eternal judgment (14:8-10). Not only actions, but also "the secrets of the heart (ταμεία καρδίας)" are visible to God (14:8; see also 17:25).

¹⁷⁹ Charlesworth, *PMR*, 195; Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 388. Nickelsburg (*Jewish Literature*, 203) argues for the Pharisaic connection.

¹⁸⁰ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 131.

¹⁸¹ On Psalm 2 see Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 204-205.

¹⁸² 3:11-12; 13:11; 14:8-10; 15:10-13. See Joachim Schüpphaus, *Die Psalmen Salomos: Ein Zeugnis Jerusalemer Theologie und Frömmigkeit in der mitte des vorchristlichen Jahrhunderts* (ALGHJ 7; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 92-93.

¹⁸³ For example, in 2:32-35; 4:24; 8:24-26; 9:2-3; 9:5; 12:6. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 134.

¹⁸⁴ Wright, *OTP*, vol. 2, p. 642; Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 399-401. Nickelsburg (*Jewish Literature*, 204-212) divides the psalms into two groups, the "Psalms of the Nation" (1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 17, 18) and the "Psalms of the Righteous and the Pious" (3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16). It is true that in the latter group of psalms political events play no significant role. Nevertheless, the main target of both groups of psalms appears to be those who are regarded as apostate and thus responsible for the Roman desecration of Jerusalem (compare 4:6-8 with 2:3-4). So also Schüpphaus (*Psalmen Salomos*, 97-105), who stresses that the psalms see righteous and sinners defined by their covenantal relation to God, not by individual deeds.

We see in these Psalms a situation in which the function of divine judgment is in transition. On the one hand, moral recompense for individuals and national groups is seen to be worked out within history and can be used as an explanation of past events or present circumstances. On the other hand, judgment can also function as a response to a sense of crisis.¹⁸⁵ As Nickelsburg points out, however, the crisis for the righteous is not persecution (as, for example in Daniel 12) or social inequities (as, for example, in *1 Enoch* 92-105).¹⁸⁶ Rather, the crisis is perceived as the situation of Judaism itself: the desecration of Jerusalem by Pompey and the continuing apostasy of many Jews. Judaism is the victim, and it is Judaism itself which will be vindicated in the final judgment, when the devout and the hypocrites, as well as the Gentiles, receive their proper recompense.¹⁸⁷

Wisdom of Solomon

The book called the Wisdom of Solomon most likely originated in a hellenistic Jewish environment in Egypt.¹⁸⁸ Recent opinion favors a date of composition in the reign of Caligula (37-41 C.E.).¹⁸⁹ The book is unique in the way it combines Jewish and hellenistic wisdom motifs with Jewish apocalyptic traditions.¹⁹⁰ There is general agreement that Wisdom falls into three major sections:¹⁹¹ the "book of eschatology" (1:1-6:11), the "book of wisdom" (6:12-9:18), and the "book of history" (chapters 10-19). Divine judgment language plays a role in the first and third sections only. The second section focuses on the nature of and quest for wisdom and serves to underscore the importance of wisdom for immortality (8:13).¹⁹² Thus it reinforces the parenetic message

¹⁸⁵ Wright, *OTP*, vol. 2, p. 643.

¹⁸⁶ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 131-32.

¹⁸⁷ See especially the messianic Psalm 17.

¹⁸⁸ David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Anchor Bible 43; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1979), 3; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 184. English translations are according to the RSV. I use the Greek text edited by Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*.

¹⁸⁹ Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 3 and 20-25. His arguments are accepted by John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), 182; also by Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 184.

¹⁹⁰ John J. Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Age," *HR* 17 (1977-78), 122-23 and 134-41; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 175.

¹⁹¹ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 175. With some minor variations also Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 4; Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation," 123-24.

¹⁹² Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 42; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 181; James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 34-35.

of the "book of eschatology," but without any use of judgment language. In the "book of history" judgment language is used only in the sense of the this-worldly recompense of God, illustrated from Israel's history.¹⁹³

This leaves the first section as the only part of Wisdom in which future judgment plays a role. Nickelsburg isolates within these chapters a "story of the persecuted and vindicated righteous man" (1:16-2:20 and 4:16-5:13), which he compares to other such stories in Jewish literature.¹⁹⁴ In 1:16-2:20 the ungodly speak. They deny immortality and just recompense, decide to oppress the righteous man because his very existence is a reprimand to their way of life, and agree to put his virtue to the test. The story is picked up again in 4:16-5:13. After the righteous man dies, in apparent confirmation of the skepticism of the ungodly, they also die. In 4:20-5:2 they, much to their chagrin, face not only a postmortem reckoning for their lawless deeds but also the righteous man himself, now enjoying the confidence and salvation which had been the goal of his poor life. The story concludes with a speech in which the ungodly confess their foolishness.

The judgment scene in 4:20-5:2 is the climactic moment of this story, and it is this story which is the central illustration of the message of this first section of Wisdom: unrighteousness leads to death, righteousness to immortal life.¹⁹⁵ The judgment of death on sinners is already hinted at in 1:6-12, as is the immortality of righteousness in 1:15. In 2:21-3:9 the intention of God that people be righteous and live in immortality is described, and in 3:10-13 the sure punishment of the ungodly who despise wisdom. After further contrasting of the righteous and ungodly in 3:14-4:15 and the conclusion of the story of the righteous man, 5:14-16 once again announce the eschatological recompense:

Because the hope of the ungodly man is like chaff carried by the
wind. . . .
But the righteous live for ever,
and their reward (μισθός) is with the Lord.

Verses 17-23 continue with a vivid description of the annihilation of the wicked, who are characterized as the Lord's enemies and madmen.

Nickelsburg argues that the postmortem judgment scene in 4:20-5:13 is not speaking of a universal final judgment, but only of the adjudica-

¹⁹³ See 11:9, 13; 12:12-27; 16:18, 24. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 181-84.

¹⁹⁴ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 48; analysis of other such Jewish stories on pp. 49-58; analysis of Wisdom 2 and 4-5 on pages 58-66.

¹⁹⁵ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 48.

tion of this particular man's persecution.¹⁹⁶ Nevertheless, the author does seem to envision a general postmortem recompense as well, even though the eschatological timetable in Wisdom is rather vague. The "day" of judgment which is referred to in 3:18 and the time of visitation or examination in 3:7, 3:13, and 4:6 may refer to a judgment at the time of the individual's death.¹⁹⁷

The function of judgment in Wisdom is somewhat difficult to determine with precision. On the one hand, it shows evidence of being interested in individual postmortem recompense on the basis of one's attitude to wisdom, using such phrases as "hope for the wages (μισθόν) of holiness" and "prize (γέρας) for blameless souls" (2:22). In 6:17 it is promised that giving heed to the laws of wisdom is the "assurance of immortality." Judgment is not spoken of as a final act of God, but rather as the recompense after the death of each person.

On the other hand, however, we have seen that the central story of chapters 2 and 4-5 sees judgment as the vindication of the persecuted righteous person. Further, chapters 1-6 are framed by warnings of judgment to the rulers (1:1-11 and 6:1-11). Further, the description of the wicked and their punishment in 5:17-23 sounds like a vision meant to provide encouragement for a community in a desperate situation.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, we should see in Wisdom a joining of two functions of judgment. It follows the dominant line of the Jewish use of final judgment as a means of instilling courage and steadfastness in situations of conflict and crisis. But at the same time it broadens its view, perhaps under hellenistic influence, to see postmortem judgment as the ultimate and only adequate consequence of one's relationship with wisdom.

We note again that divine knowledge is connected with judgment in Wisdom. Evil words (1:8) and thoughts (1:6) are known by God. Future examination by God will result in reward (3:13) or punishment (4:6; 6:3). We see that the expressions are varied, but the common motif is that God's perfect knowledge or examination of human beings guarantees the justice of God's recompense.

The Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls

The study of judgment language in the Qumran documents presents both special opportunities and special problems. The special opportunity lies in the possibility of seeing how the symbolic vision of judg-

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 68.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 87-89.

¹⁹⁸ Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 23.

ment can be related to an actual social organization.¹⁹⁹ The problem lies in the facts that these texts were composed over a period of perhaps two centuries, some of them have gone through various stages of composition, our knowledge of the community or communities represented in them is far from adequate,²⁰⁰ and the eschatological conceptions appear to be quite diverse and often vague. The result is that various scholarly pictures of Qumran eschatology have emerged. Morton Smith suggested a community in which each individual was free to imagine his own eschatology.²⁰¹ Philip Davies, on the other hand, has argued forcefully that different conceptions must be related to stages of redaction and the changing history of the sect.²⁰² Neither Smith nor Davies finds a coherent system of eschatology in the texts. John Collins with equal forcefulness rejects the views of Davies and Smith and argues instead that the polyvalent symbolism of Qumran eschatology represents one recurring pattern and view of the universe, which is related to various levels of concern.²⁰³ Davies' view relies too heavily on supposed conceptual inconsistencies for isolating the redactional stages. I think it best to analyze the judgment language in each of the documents as a unit which made sense to its community, and then at the end to compare and summarize the functions of judgment language in all the texts.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁹ Nils A. Dahl, "Eschatology and History in Light of the Qumran Texts," in *The Crucified Messiah and Other Essays* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1974), 133; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 141.

²⁰⁰ One question is whether all of the documents speak of life in the Qumran community itself, or whether some texts address the life of the wider (Essene) community in the towns of Israel. See Philip R. Davies, "Eschatology at Qumran," *JBL* 104 (1985), 44; also Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective* (London: Collins, 1977), 105-106.

²⁰¹ See the summary by Davies, "Eschatology at Qumran," 40.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 40-42 and 48. Davies directs his arguments particularly against John Collins.

²⁰³ John J. Collins, "Patterns of Eschatology at Qumran," in *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith* (Festschrift honoring Frank Moore Cross; ed. Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson; Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1981), 372-73. In basic agreement with the position of Collins is Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 239, note 1.

²⁰⁴ My focus will be on those texts which seem to be written in or unique to the Qumran community: the *War Scroll* (1QM); the *Habakkuk pesher* (1QpHab) and other *pesherim* from caves 1 and 4; the *Community Rule* (1QS); the *Damascus Document* (CD); and the *Hymns Scroll* (1QH). See Hartmut Stegemann, "Die Bedeutung der Qumranfunde für die Erforschung der Apokalyptik," in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, 511-12. I will make occasional reference to other fragmentary texts. In any case, the *Temple Scroll* and the *Genesis Apocryphon* make no use of judgment language. Except where otherwise noted all English translations are by Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (3rd ed.; Penguin Books, 1987). Except for the *pesherim* and some of the Hymns, I have consulted the Hebrew text in the handbook edition of Eduard Lohse, *Die Texte aus Qumran: Hebräisch und Deutsch* (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1964).

The War Scroll (1QM)

It is possible that 1 QM contains both some of the oldest and some of the latest material within the Qumran texts.²⁰⁵ In any case, columns 1 and 15-19 appear to be a framework, within which columns 2-9 fit with some tension.²⁰⁶ In the *War Scroll* as it now exists divine judgment, expressed in terms of a battle between the "sons of light" and the "sons of darkness," is the main theme. The scroll describes both the battle with its preparations and the results of the battle.²⁰⁷ The participants in the battle are seen as human and cosmic forces together. The "sons of darkness" are not only the cosmic troops of Belial/Satan but are also identified as the "Kittim," who stand for Greeks and/or Romans. These Kittim are in turn associated with all the traditional enemies of Israel and also with "the ungodly of the covenant" (1:1-2). In 1QM wickedness is seen on both the level of the Gentile nations and on the cosmic level; both together are designated as the "sons of darkness." The "sons of light" are never clearly defined. The specific instructions for their part in the battle (mostly in columns 2-9) would suggest some identification with the specific community which used the *War Scroll*. But it is best to accept the opinion of John Collins that in 1QM there is no total identification of the "sons of light" with a particular social group. The door is open to seeing other individuals outside the community as belonging to the side of light. Thus the dualism between light and darkness in 1QM applies on different levels at the same time: the individual, the social order, and the cosmic order.²⁰⁸

The description of the battle itself draws heavily on judgment language. It is "the day appointed from ancient times for the battle of destruction of the sons of darkness" (1:10); it is a time of vengeance on God's enemies (3:6-7; 4:12; 7:5; 15:6), of wrath (4:1-2), of defeat

²⁰⁵ Stegemann, "Die Bedeutung der Qumranfunde," 511-12.

²⁰⁶ Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 127. Columns 10-14 seem to be related to columns 15-19. For the following analysis I am much indebted to Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 126-30.

²⁰⁷ Jean Carmignac ("La future intervention de Dieu selon la pensée de Qumrân," in *Qumrân: Sa piété, sa théologie et son milieu* [ed. M. Delcor; BETL 46; Paris-Gembloux: Éditions Duculot; Leuven: University Press, 1978], 219-29) somewhat too systematically draws together the eschatological acts in 1 QM and other Qumran texts into three acts: first, an invasion by the Kittim, who destroy the apostate Jews (mostly in the *pescharim*); second, the war of liberation itself (mostly in 1QM); third, the results of the war—extermination of the wicked and life in paradise for the pious. Parts of this outline fit some of the texts, but no one text clearly describes all three stages. Further, much judgment language in some texts does not fit into this pattern.

²⁰⁸ Collins, "Patterns of Eschatology at Qumran," 363-365.

for wickedness (17:5-6). Deliverance for the "company of God" and destruction for "the nations of wickedness" will be the result (15:1-2). The wicked will receive their deserved recompense: the army of light will "pay the reward (*lšlm gmwl*) of their wickedness to all the nations of vanity" (6:6).²⁰⁹ All the forces of evil will be exterminated.²¹⁰ On the other hand, the sons of light will be saved:

This shall be a time of salvation for the people of God, an age of dominion for all the members of His company, and of everlasting destruction for all the company of Satan. . . . The dominion of the Kittim shall come to an end and iniquity shall be vanquished, leaving no remnant. . . . And, at the season appointed by God, His exalted greatness shall shine eternally to the peace, blessing, glory, joy, and long life of all the sons of light.²¹¹

So judgment in 1 QM has both eschatological and cosmic scope, and it separates the faithful covenanters and their allies from the Gentile nations and their allies. In this document judgment language arises out of the continued conflict between Israel and the nations and functions to provide encouragement in times of stress, not by creating a strong sense of sectarian identity, but rather by creating a sense of the cosmic power and divine control of the times which stands on the side of the faithful Israelite against all his enemies. This passage in 17:8-9 expresses well the purpose of the *War Scroll* and its judgment language:

And you, the sons of His Covenant, be strong in the ordeal of God! His mysteries shall uphold you until He moves His hand for His trials to come to an end.

Biblical Interpretation

The Qumran documents, all fragmentary, which engage in verse-by-verse interpretation of Scripture are called *pesharim*. The extant texts, especially the commentary on Habakkuk, deal mainly with the history of the community and the events of the end of days, particularly divine judgment.²¹² The clear function of most judgment language in these

²⁰⁹ See also 4:12 and 11:13-14 .

²¹⁰ 1:10; 4:12; 9:5-6a; 11:10-11; 13:16; 14:5; 17:5-6; 18:1-2. See also 11QM¹ 9-13 and 1QMyst (1Q27) 1:3-4.

²¹¹ 1:5-9. See 17:6 and 18:10. See also 4Q181 (in Vermes, *Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 159).

²¹² Maurya P. Horgan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books* (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979), 11-12. We are fortunate to have the excellent edition of the texts with translations and notes by Horgan, to which I will refer in this section.

pesharim is to affirm the identity of the sectarian community against both Gentiles and other Jews, especially those who oppose the covenants.²¹³ The historical enemies of the sect, especially the Wicked Priest and the priests in Jerusalem, are special objects of God's judgment. This can be a judgment already accomplished, as in 1QpHab 9:9-12:

The interpretation of it concerns the [W]icked Priest, whom—because of wrong done to the Teacher of Righteousness and his partisans—God gave him into the hand of his enemies to humble him with disease for annihilation in despair, beca[u]se he had acted wickedly against his chosen ones.²¹⁴

More often, the judgment on the Jerusalem priests is envisioned as a future punishment from God which will come at the hands of the Kit-tim.²¹⁵ Most frequently, however, the judgment of the Wicked Priest and his cohorts is to be inflicted by God in the final day, as in 1QpHab 12:2-6:

The interpretation of the passage concerns the Wicked Priest—to pay him his due (*lšlm lw ʾt gmwlw*) inasmuch as he dealt wickedly (*gml*) with the poor ones. . . . (he it is) whom God will sentence to complete destruction (*yšwptmw ʾl lklh*) because he plotted to destroy completely (*lklwt*) the poor ones.²¹⁶

Here the plays on *gml* and *klh* enable the interpreter to utilize the old recompense form of *quid pro quo*. Final judgment on the Jewish enemies of the elect is promised often in the *pesharim*.²¹⁷

Judgment language in the *pesharim* also serves to define the community of the elect over against the Gentiles:

The interpretation of it concerns all the nations who have served stone and wood, but on the day of judgment God will wipe out completely all who serve the idols and the evil ones from the earth.²¹⁸

²¹³ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 243 and 247.

²¹⁴ Translation by Horgan, *Pesharim*, 18. See also 9:1-2.

²¹⁵ 4QpPs^a (4Q171) 2:18-20; 4:8-10; 1QpHab 9:4-7.

²¹⁶ Horgan, *Pesharim*, 20. Friedrich Nötscher (*Zur Theologischen Terminologie der Qumran-Texte* [BBB; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1956], 162-63) cites this as a passage in which it is ambiguous whether the judgment is eschatological or not. But Horgan is correct in seeing this passage in the context of others in the Habbakkuk *peshar* which speak of a final judgment; see Horgan, *Pesharim*, 11-12.

²¹⁷ 1QpHab 5:4-5; 10:3-5, 9-13; 11:12-15; 4QpIsa^b (4Q162) 2:1-10; 4QpNah (4Q169), frag. 3-4, 4:3-6; 4QpPs^a (4Q171), frag. 1-10, 2:3-4. See also 4Qflor (4Q174) 1:7-9.

²¹⁸ 1QpHab 13:1-4 (Horgan, *Pesharim*, 21). See also 4QpNah (4Q169), frag. 1-2, 2:3-4; 4QpIsa^a (4Q161), frag. 7-10, 3:7-8 and 22-26; 1QpHab 12:12-14.

In 1QpHab 5:3-6 judgment of both Gentiles and wicked Israelites is given by God into the hands of his people. At the end all wickedness will be exterminated.²¹⁹ From this final judgment the elect will be saved:

The interpretation of it concerns all those who observe the Law in the House of Judah, whom God will save from the house of judgment on account of their tribulation and their fidelity to the Teacher of Righteousness.²²⁰

In summary, then, in the *pesharim* the historical separation of the sectarians from both their Jewish opponents and from the idolatrous nations is seen to be confirmed and reinforced by the final separation of the elect community from its enemies on the day of judgment.

The Community Rule (1QS)

This document was probably compiled in the first century B.C.E.²²¹ to serve as a manual for the life of the group living a monastic existence at Qumran.²²² Divine judgment has an important role in this complex document, in various ways. First, in the liturgy of initiation into the sect found in 1:16-2:18,²²³ judgment language is the principal means of signifying the separation of the initiate from the world to be left behind. A confession of sins accepts the justice of God's past and present judgment on Israel, including the initiate (1:26), but acknowledges that God has rewarded (gml) his people with present mercy (2:1).²²⁴ Then follows a priestly blessing which ends with the promise of "everlasting bliss" (2:2-3). Corresponding to the blessing of the elect are curses, first against all the people of "the lot of Satan," who because of their wickedness are to be delivered up to vengeance and will be "damned in the shadowy place of everlasting fire" (2:4-10).²²⁵ The second curse is directed against potential backsliders: "God's wrath and His zeal for His pre-

²¹⁹ 4QpPs^a (4Q171), frag. 1-10, 2:7-8 and 4:11.

²²⁰ 1QpHab 8:1-3 (Horgan, *Pesharim*, 17). See also 1QpMic (1Q14), frag. 10, lines 6-7; 4QpPs^a (4Q171), frag. 1-10, 2:2-5 and 9-11.

²²¹ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 132. P. Wernberg-Moller (*The Manual of Discipline* [STDJ 1; Leiden: Brill, 1957], 20) dates it in the early second century B.C.E.

²²² Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*, 87.

²²³ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 135; A. R. C. Leane, *The Rule of Qumran and its Meaning* (NTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), 112-13.

²²⁴ See also 1QS 10:11, 13, 16-17; 11:2, 5, 10, 12. These passages from the hymn which concludes the *Rule* are similar to some of the judgment language in the *Hymns Scroll*, for which see below. On the theology see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 293-94.

²²⁵ For another use of judgment language in a curse of Satan and his followers see 4Q286-287 (in Vermes, *Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 160).

cepts shall consume him in everlasting destruction" (2:11-18). Thus a boundary is drawn between all outsiders and internal apostates, on the one hand, and the initiate on the other. Another passage in the description of the community life itself underscores the need for separation from the outsiders (5:10-13):

And he shall undertake by the Covenant to separate from all the men of falsehood who walk in the way of wickedness. . . . Therefore Wrath shall rise up to condemn, and Vengeance shall be executed by the curses of the Covenant, and great chastisements of eternal destruction shall be visited on them, leaving no remnant.

A similar function of judgment language is found in columns 8-10, which seems to be an old set of guidelines for the original sect or for an elite within the community.²²⁶ Here it is said of the members of the "Council of the Community" that they will be witnesses to the truth at the judgment and will pay to the wicked their reward (8:6-10). In the following instructions for the "Master" (*mškyl*) his separation from outsiders is confirmed by the requirement that he show zeal for the coming eschatological war and judgment (9:23 and 25).²²⁷

Another distinct section of the *Community Rule*, 3:13-4:26, uses judgment language in a very different manner. Here we have a catechetical exposition of the "two ways," a form which owes much to the use of moral recompense language in connection with the covenant, as in Deut 28.²²⁸ The section begins with a sort of table of contents: the readers will be taught about "their visitation for chastisement, and the time of their reward" (3:14-15). The central motif in the teaching which follows is that God has ordained two spirits, of truth and of falsehood, within all people. The focus here is not on any division between the community and outsiders, but on the psychological division within each person, which is the source of temptation. It is repeatedly stressed that only at the final judgment will there be an end to this domination of the two spirits. Only the judgment will resolve the internal conflict:

The nature of all the children of men is ruled by these (two spirits), and during their life all the hosts of men have a portion in their divisions and walk in (both) their ways. . . . For God has established the spirits in equal measure until the final age. . . . But in the mysteries of His understanding, and in His glorious wisdom, God has ordained an end for falsehood, and at the time of the visitation He will destroy it for ever. Then truth, which has wallowed in the ways of wickedness

²²⁶ See Leaney, *Rule of Qumran*, 210-11; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 132-33.

²²⁷ On this see the comments of Leaney, *Rule of Qumran*, 233.

²²⁸ Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 156-59, 164-66.

during the dominion of falsehood until the appointed time of judgment, shall arise in the world for ever. God will then purify every deed of man with his truth; He will refine for Himself the human frame by rooting out all spirit of falsehood from the bounds of his flesh.²²⁹

In 4:6-8 and 11-14 virtue and vice lists define the postmortem reward or torment of those who walk in the spirit of truth or the spirit of falsehood. Unlike the other uses of judgment language in 1QS, in columns 3-4 no reference to a socially bounded group is made.²³⁰ Yet, taking this "two ways" teaching within its whole context in the *Rule*, we can still see that it serves to reinforce the way of life of the sectarians; it gives the struggling adherent encouragement in his attempt not to become a backslider and bring down upon himself the curses associated with the outsiders who walk in the spirit of falsehood.

That in fact the "two ways" catechesis of columns 3-4 must be seen as serving a social function within the community of the elect is shown by one striking and unique aspect of the group's life as described in 1QS: judgment of members by leaders of the community. The community was not a loosely bounded structure in which God's final judgment would sort out who was truly a son of light. On the contrary, judgment was enacted on the human level, as a means of purifying the sect from the sin of the outside world and the spirit of falsehood, anticipating God's judgment.²³¹ The judgment language used to describe these procedures is quite explicit. In 5:6-7 it is said that members will "take part in the trial and judgment and condemnation (*wlryb wlmšpt lhršyc*) of all those who transgress the precepts." In 5:20-6:1 is described what happens to an initiate: his spirit is to be examined (*drš*) with respect to the Torah. He is to be given a rank among his peers, according to his understanding and deeds. His spirit and deeds are to be "visited" (*pqd*) yearly, i.e., examined and judged, so that he can be advanced or demoted in rank.²³² Another set of guidelines in 6:13-23 is similar: the "Guardian" (*pqyd*) examines (*drš*) the man concerning his understanding and deeds; after a year he is examined again; after a second year he is "visited"; only then can he become a full member of the community.²³³ In 9:14-15 the duties of the "Master" (*mškyt*) are described:

²²⁹ 1QS 4:15-23. See also 3:18 and 4:25-26.

²³⁰ Collins, "Patterns of Eschatology at Qumran," 364.

²³¹ Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 43-44.

²³² *Ibid.*, 47.

²³³ Similar instructions for the "Guardian" are given in CD 13:11-12.

He shall separate and weigh the sons of righteousness according to their spirit. . . . He shall judge every man according to his spirit. He shall admit him in accordance with the cleanness of his hands and advance him in accordance with his understanding.

To an extraordinary degree, then, acts of judgment within the community itself determine not only whether the would-be member of the elect is to be considered on the inside or outside but also his ranking within the elect. Appeal to future divine judgment confirms and strengthens the zeal of the sectarian to remain apart from the outside world, not to backslide, and to struggle against the spirit of falsehood within him. In 1QS judgment functions to solidify the community, not against outside opponents of the sect, but against the evil world that lurks both without and within.

One further passage in the *Community Rule* calls for special comment, part of the hymn that concludes the *Rule*, in 10:17-20:

I will pay to no man the reward of evil;
 I will pursue him with goodness.
 For judgement of all the living is with God
 and it is He who will render to man his reward (*gmwl*).
 I will not envy in a spirit of wickedness,
 my soul shall not desire the riches of violence.
 I will not grapple with the men of perdition
 until the Day of Revenge,
 but my wrath shall not turn from the men of falsehood
 and I will not rejoice until judgement is made.

As Krister Stendahl shows in his analysis of this passage, the last two lines do not contradict the rest of the passage.²³⁴ The elect indeed carry "wrath" against people of the outside world, but this hatred is to be practiced in a hidden way in the present time.²³⁵ Neither vengeance, nor envy, nor open conflict are appropriate now, for the true and final recompense is at hand—God's judgment. This passage belongs with the category I have referred to as "appeals to the higher court of God's judgment." It provides a rationale for allowing necessary dealings with the outside world. It is important to note that it is only one's relation-

²³⁴ Krister Stendahl, "Hate, Non-Retaliation, and Love (1QS X, 17-20 and Rom. 12:19-21)," *HTR* 55 (1962), 343-55.

²³⁵ On vengeance within the community see the prohibitions in 1QS 7:9 and CD 9:2-8, neither of which make reference to future judgment. In fact, in 1QS 7:9 taking revenge in the community is an offense subject to community discipline.

ship with the outside world which is governed by this appeal to God's judgment.

The Damascus Document (CD)

This work is preserved only in fragments at Qumran but in fuller form in manuscripts discovered in Cairo. It is usually divided into two parts: the Admonitions (columns 1-8 and 19-20) and the Commandments (columns 9-16).²³⁶ Judgment language plays a role only in the Admonitions, and its functions parallel what we have seen in other Qumran documents. Those who enter the covenant and hold fast to it by keeping the community's precepts will live forever (3:20 and 7:5-9).²³⁷ But God will judge and take retribution on the wicked who depart from the way and despise the community precepts (2:2-8). In 7:21-8:9, after a reminder of the historical punishment of the Jewish apostates by the Gentiles, similar future judgment is threatened against all who turn away from the covenant.²³⁸ The same pattern is found in 20:8b-13 and 15-20, where it is promised that those who remain faithful against the "Scoffers" who despised the covenant have their names written in a book before God for their final salvation (20:19). As in 1QS, also in CD judgment language is used to describe community disciplinary procedures, as in CD 20:1-8. In 20:24-34 it is said that those who backslide from the covenant are to be judged in the community council. But if they accept these judgments and learn from them they will prevail in the final judgment. In summary, then, the dominant focus of CD is the separation of the members of the covenant from other Jews and from backsliding members, and judgment language plays a role in encouraging that separation. The *Damascus Document*, however, unlike 1QS, seems to envision a separation not into a monastic community, but a separateness in style of life which is to be pursued within life in the towns.²³⁹

²³⁶ Philip R. Davies, *The Damascus Covenant: An Interpretation of the "Damascus Document."* (JSOTSup 25; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982), 48; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 123.

²³⁷ 7:5-9 in MS A is equivalent to 19:1-6 in MS B. MS B continues with further reference to future judgment of the faithful and the apostates (19:7-13).

²³⁸ 7:21-8:9 in MS A is equivalent to 19:13-22 in MS B.

²³⁹ Davies, "Eschatology at Qumran," 45; Vermes, *Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective*, 97.

The Hymn Scroll (1QH)

The largest problem facing the interpreter of the judgment language in this collection of hymns is the frequent ambiguity of the temporal references. Is judgment considered to be in this life or after death?²⁴⁰ In at least some of the hymns it is clear that eschatological language is used to express the present experience of the members of the community.²⁴¹ In a few passages present judgments serve to educate the covenanter.²⁴² Very often the present experience of God's judgment is the confidence that, in spite of the fact that no one is innocent before God's judgment and in spite of scourging for sins, God in his mercy forgives.²⁴³ In many other texts, however, the psalmist sees his entry into the community and his separation from outsiders as being confirmed by a final judgment of salvation for himself and the community, and destruction of all who have rejected the covenant. So in 3:19-36 the psalmist gives thanks that he has been redeemed and has entered the community, but then the focus shifts from his present personal experience to an apocalyptic vision of the final battle against Belial and the victory of God in a final judgment.²⁴⁴ His present experience of salvation must wait until the final judgment to be fully confirmed. Other hymns focus on the conflict between the psalmist and his opponents. In the hymn in 4:5-5:4 the conflict between the "teachers of lies" and the psalmist is resolved in judgment:

Thou wilt destroy in Judgement all men of lies,
and there shall be no more seers of error. . . .
But those who please Thee
shall stand before Thee for ever.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁰ On this see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 148-56; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 133-38.

²⁴¹ Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 133.

²⁴² 1:17-18; 1:33; 5:15-16; 17:13-15.

²⁴³ 1:23, 26; 5:5-6; 7:26-33; 9:8-10, 12-13, 14-17, 34; 10:34-36; 11:8; 14:24; 18:25. See also, in the concluding hymn of 1 QS, 11:2, 5, 10, 12, 14.

²⁴⁴ Bonnie Pedrotti Kittel, *The Hymns of Qumran: Translation and Commentary* (SBLDS 50; Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1981), 73, 78, 80, 175; Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 153 and 156.

²⁴⁵ 4:20-21. Translation by Vermes, *Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 176. See also lines 26-27 and 5:4. On this hymn see Nickelsburg, *Resurrection*, 149; also *Jewish Literature*, 138-39. See also 15:14-20; 6:9, 18, 29-36.

In the hymn in 7:6-25 the psalmist actually declares that he and his teaching will be the measure of God's judgment:

For all my attackers you declare guilty in judgment,
To separate in me between the righteous and the evil.²⁴⁶

So in the *Hymn Scroll* future judgment serves to strengthen the confidence of the individual member of the community in his struggle against those outside, especially those Jews who oppose the sect.

Conclusions on the Qumran Documents

This survey of judgment language in the Dead Sea Scrolls has, I believe, confirmed the thesis that, in spite of diverse formulations, there is a coherence in the view of the world presupposed.²⁴⁷ In each of the documents the vision of final judgment serves to place the separation of the community from the outside world within a cosmic framework. The initiate who enters the covenant leaves behind the world which is destined for ultimate annihilation and enters the company of the saved. Since in many ways the final judgment only serves to confirm the separation already made in joining the sect, in some cases the judgment language is temporally ambiguous—present separation and future judgment blend together. Further, continued adherence to the community and its ways is encouraged by reference to judgment—first of all by the present community acts of examination and judgment over the individual as he progresses in his struggle to leave behind all taint of the outside world, and secondly, by the threat of final judgment against backsliders. Even the individualistic use of judgment language in the "two ways" section of the *Community Rule* serves to strengthen the boundaries of the community by helping to keep members walking in the right spirit. In short, judgment language in the Dead Sea Scrolls arises out of a perceived crisis—on one level the historical crisis that led to the formation of the sect and on another level the crisis caused by the dominance of the spirit of falsehood in the world. For this study it is important to note that, here where we can see eschatological judgment functioning within a community, such language does not serve to resolve problems which arise among the faithful members of the community. Nor is there much room for fuzzy boundaries—one is either in and destined for salvation or out and destined for annihilation.

²⁴⁶ Lines 11-12; translation by Kittel, *Hymns of Qumran*, 125. See Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 139-40, and *Resurrection*, 147-48. See also 2:23-25.

²⁴⁷ Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 139-40.

The Testament of Abraham and 2 Enoch

These two late works can be considered together because of their similar perspectives on judgment. The *Testament of Abraham* is probably a late first century C.E.²⁴⁸ work from the hellenistic Judaism of Egypt.²⁴⁹ The work is extant in two Greek recensions. Which of these is earlier is a matter of dispute. Nickelsburg argues, convincingly in my opinion, that the longer recension A is more primitive because it has a clear plot and theme. Recension B seems to be a truncated version which has lost its sense of plot and focus.²⁵⁰ I will be concerned with recension A, since in any case recension B adds nothing to A as far as judgment language is concerned.

The story told in *T. Abraham* is of Abraham's refusal to accept death; this story occupies chapters 1-8 and 15-20. This story carries the problem addressed in the work: the dissonance between the necessity of death and the reluctance to die (see 1:3). Abraham resists and stalls, prompting God to command the archangel Michael to remind him that no one can escape Death (8:9b). As a stalling tactic, Abraham asks to have a tour of the whole world (9:6). After the tour, which occupies chapters 10-14, Abraham is returned home and by a trick he finally dies (chapters 15-20). In the pivotal central tour of the world, Abraham begins badly by causing sinners to be immediately destroyed. He is rebuked for this by God, who usually delays death so that the sinner can repent (10:14). This leads to Abraham's being shown the "judgments and recompenses" in heaven (10:15).

This brings the reader to the judgment scene in chapters 11-14.²⁵¹ At the first gate of heaven Abraham sees two ways with two gates, for the

²⁴⁸ Charlesworth, *PMR*, 70; Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 259; Russell, *Method and Message*, 60-61; Ed Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 869 and 875. On *T. Abraham* see Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 248-53; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 201-204.

²⁴⁹ Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 259; Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 869 and 875; John J. Collins, "The Genre Apocalypse in Hellenistic Judaism," in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, 541-44. Fischer (*Eschatologie*, 7) is doubtful of the diaspora provenance. For convenience I cite the English translation by Ed Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1. For the Greek text I have used Michael E. Stone, *The Testament of Abraham: The Greek Recensions* (Texts and Translations 2, Pseudepigrapha Series 2; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1972). Stone's text is a reprint of the Greek text edited by M. R. James, *The Testament of Abraham* (Cambridge: University Press, 1892).

²⁵⁰ George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr., "Eschatology in the Testament of Abraham: A Study of the Judgment Scenes in the Two Recensions," in *Studies on the Testament of Abraham* (ed. George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr.; SBLSCS 6; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976), 55 and 58; see also by Nickelsburg in the same volume, "Structure and Message in the Testament of Abraham," 92. Compare Collins, "The Genre Apocalypse," 541-44; Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 872.

²⁵¹ For an analysis of this scene see Nickelsburg, "Eschatology in the Testament of Abraham," 42-43.

few saved and the many sinners (chapter 11). Then, entering the broad gate, Abraham sees a throne and a wondrous man on it.²⁵² Before the throne are angels doing three things: at a table two angels record righteous deeds and sins on a papyrus; another angel weighs souls in a balance; another angel tests souls with fire. Abraham is told that this is a scene of "judgment and recompense" (12:15). Abraham sees one soul that, upon being examined, is found to have sins and righteous deeds equally balanced; it is neither given to torture or to be saved, but is set in the middle. Chapter 13 contains the explanation of these sights. The man on the throne is Abel, who sits to examine and judge both righteous and sinners. So humans are judged by a human, until the parousia of God, when "there will be perfect judgment and recompense" (13:4). In fact, there are three tribunals: that of Abel, a second before the twelve tribes, and the final judgment and recompense of God (13:5-8).²⁵³ Then the activities of the angels are explained:

The two angels, the one on the right and the one on the left, these are those who record sins and righteous deeds. The one on the right records righteous deeds, while the one on the left (records) sins. And the sunlike angel, who holds the balance in his hand, this is the archangel Dokiël, the righteous balance-bearer, and he weighs the righteous deeds and the sins with the righteousness of God. And the fiery and merciless angel, who holds the fire in his hand, this is the archangel Purouël, who has authority over fire, and he tests the work of men through fire. And if the fire burns up the work of anyone, immediately the angel of judgment takes him and carries him away to the place of sinners, a most bitter place of punishment. But if the fire tests the work of anyone and does not touch it, this person is justified and the angel of righteousness takes him and carries him up to be saved in the lot of the righteous. And thus, most righteous Abraham, all things in all people are tested by fire and balance.²⁵⁴

In chapter 14 the fate of the soul in the middle is resolved: Abraham's prayer suffices to attain salvation for this soul. Abraham then begs forgiveness for his hasty destruction of the sinners he had seen, and these are given salvation.

²⁵² There is some literary tension here, with this second judgment inside the gate taking place after the first separation of the two ways outside the gate; see Nickelsburg, "Eschatology in the Testament of Abraham," 41.

²⁵³ Only the first tribunal receives much attention; the other two have no real function. See Nickelsburg, "Eschatology in the Testament of Abraham," 40 and 46-47; Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 878.

²⁵⁴ 13:9-14. For Greek and Egyptian elements in this judgment scene see Nickelsburg, "Eschatology in the Testament of Abraham," 27; Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 889; Heiligenthal, *Werke*, 257-60; G. H. Macurdy, "Platonic Orphism in the Testament of Abraham," *JBL* 61 (1942), 213-26.

We note here a number of important points. An individual postmortem and a final judgment of all are combined. One's corporate identity is not an issue—only the balance of an individual's deeds matters. It follows that a great emphasis is placed on the revealing of those deeds, by the three mechanisms of books, scales, and testing in fire. Within the whole *T. Abraham* this judgment scene serves first to teach a religious outlook in which commonplace moral values, not identity as a Jew or a Gentile, are important.²⁵⁵ Secondly, the judgment scene serves to provide a proper perspective on death.²⁵⁶ No social crisis or conflict is at issue.²⁵⁷

It has long been noticed that there are close verbal resemblances between *T. Abraham* 13:11-13 and 1 Corinthians 3:13-15, resemblances too close to be coincidental.²⁵⁸ All the possibilities of relationship have been suggested: that Paul depends on *T. Abraham*,²⁵⁹ that *T. Abraham* depends on Paul,²⁶⁰ or that both depend on a third text.²⁶¹ It seems unlikely on other grounds that *T. Abraham* was written and circulated early enough to have been known by Paul. Yet there is no doubt that *T. Abraham* is basically a Jewish document. The best solution seems to be that *T. Abraham*, especially recension A, was affected in minor points of language in the process of being handed down by Christian scribes.²⁶² Yet one more point needs to be noted. Discounting the actual parallels in language, there are still some striking points of contact between 1 Cor 3 and *T. Abraham* 13. It is likely that it was these similarities which led Christian scribes to utilize the language of 1 Cor 3 in *T. Abraham*

²⁵⁵ Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 876-77 and 879; Collins, "The Genre Apocalypse," 544-46.

²⁵⁶ Nickelsburg, "Structure and Message in the Testament of Abraham," 87.

²⁵⁷ Nickelsburg, "Eschatology in the Testament of Abraham," 35; Collins, "The Genre Apocalypse," 546.

²⁵⁸ The Greek text of *T. Abraham* 13:11-13 (with verbal parallels to 1 Cor 3:13-15 underlined): οὗτός ἐστιν Πυρουήλ ὁ ἀρχάγγελος ὁ ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρὸς ἔχων τὴν ἐξουσίαν, καὶ δοκιμάζει τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔργα διὰ πυρός· καὶ εἴ τις τὸ ἔργον κατακαύσει τὸ πῦρ, εὐθὺς λαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ ἄγγελος τῆς κρίσεως καὶ ἀποφέρει αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν τόπον τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν, πικρότατον κολαστήριον. εἴ τις δὲ τὸ ἔργον τὸ πῦρ δοκιμάσει καὶ μὴ ἄψεται αὐτοῦ, οὗτος δικαιοῦται, καὶ λαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἄγγελος καὶ ἀναφέρει αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σῶζεσθαι ἐν τῷ κλήρῳ τῶν δικαίων.

²⁵⁹ Charles W. Fishburne, "1 Cor. III.10-15 and the Testament of Abraham," *NTS* 17 (1970), 109-115.

²⁶⁰ Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 878-79.

²⁶¹ Heiligenthal, *Werke*, 261-62. He argues that both depend on a Persian tradition, which was also used by the third century Christian writer Lactantius. This seems highly fanciful.

²⁶² Mathias Delcor, *Le Testament D' Abraham: Introduction, Traduction du Texts Grec et Commentaire de la Recension Grecque Longue* (SVTP 2; Leiden: Brill, 1973), 66. This is also the view of Sanders in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 879. He notes also traces of Matthew 7:13-14 in *T. Abraham* 11:2 and of Matthew 7:13-14 and 25:46 in *T. Abraham* 11:10-11.

in the first place. A fuller analysis of these points of contact will have to wait until my exegesis of 1 Corinthians in Chapter Four below.

The apocalypse preserved in Slavonic and known as 2 *Enoch* is usually dated in the first century C.E., but with little agreement on whether early or late in the century.²⁶³ In any case it most likely stems from a hellenistic Jewish environment.²⁶⁴ This work also exists in two recensions, and there is little agreement on the relationship between them.²⁶⁵ The large part of 2 *Enoch* is a description of Enoch's ascent through seven heavens (chapters 3-37) and his instruction to his children (chapters 38-66). In his ascent Enoch sees places prepared for judgment: in the second heaven for the punishment of the rebellious angels (7:1-4); in the third heaven places for the righteous and for sinners, with lists of virtues and vices attached (chapters 9-10);²⁶⁶ in the fifth heaven again for the punishment of evil angels (chapter 18). In the exhortations eschatological judgment is often used for a parenetic purpose,²⁶⁷ as in 44:3-5:

(There is) anger and great judgment (for) whoever spits on a person's face. Happy is he who directs [his heart] toward every person, such as bringing help to him who has been condemned, and by giving support to him who has been broken, and by giving to the needy. Because on [the day of] the great judgment every deed of mankind will be restored by means of the written record. Happy is he whose measure will prove to be just and whose weight just and scales just! Because on the day of the great judgment every measure and every weight and every scale will be exposed as in the market; and each one will recognize his measure, and, according to measure, each shall receive his reward.²⁶⁸

Here we have eschatological judgment language undergirding specific exhortations. The judgment of individual deeds is emphasized, and that judgment is guaranteed by reference to a written record, to weighing, and to exposure.²⁶⁹ Further, the last line explicitly promises rewards to

²⁶³ Rowland (*Open Heaven*, 258-59) puts it early in the century. Charlesworth (*PMR*, 104) places it prior to 70 C.E.; Collins ("The Genre Apocalypse," 533-37) puts it late in the first century.

²⁶⁴ Rowland, *Open Heaven*, 258-59. F. I. Andersen (*OTP*, vol. 1, p. 95) says only that the date and provenance are an enigma.

²⁶⁵ Collins ("The Genre Apocalypse," 533-37) takes the shorter recension as earlier. Nickelsburg (*Jewish Literature*, 185) agrees.

²⁶⁶ See also 40:12-13.

²⁶⁷ Fischer, *Eschatologie*, 47.

²⁶⁸ Translation by Andersen in *OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 171 and 173. The long recension is similar. For mention of reward see also 51:3; 65:8-11; 66:7 (long); 50:5.

²⁶⁹ See also 46:3; 49:2-3; 50:1; 52:15; 53:1-3; 65:4-6 (long); 66:3 (long); 66:5.

the righteous that vary according to the deeds. In 50:3-5 the theme of deferring vengeance to God's future judgment is clearly represented:

[And] every assault and every wound and burn and every evil word, if they happen to you on account of the Lord, endure them; and, being able to pay them back, do not repay them to [your] neighbor, because it is the Lord who repays, and he will be the avenger for you on the day of the great judgment.²⁷⁰

In 2 *Enoch* the judgment language is used purely for the purpose of individual moral exhortation; no crisis or conflict calls forth the vision of judgment.²⁷¹ So in both *T. Abraham* and 2 *Enoch*, in a context of hellenistic Judaism in the late first century C.E., eschatological judgment language performs a function similar to that which this-worldly recompense language played in the OT and later Jewish writings. In both works the individual nature of the judgment is underscored by elaborate mechanisms for recording, weighing, testing, and revealing the works of each person.

4. *Final Summary and Conclusions*

Two different broad functions of divine judgment language can be discerned in Jewish texts from the Old Testament to the Tannaitic period. First, a belief in God's judgment can serve to define the place of the individual within the surrounding society or within the uncertain course of everyday life. Will there be peace, success, health, or will there be conflict, failure, sickness, and unhappy death? To some extent the individual's place is defined through such societal mechanisms as wages, criminal and civil courts, or the attainment of formal or informal status. In many ways, however, these means are not adequate to maintain an individual's sense of justice and willing cooperation. A conviction that God will bring just recompense within the course of the individual's life provides a surer basis for one's actions. This faith in God's recompense can work in various ways: (a) Very often in the OT and later Jewish texts, especially in wisdom writings and texts from hellenistic Judaism, the judgment or recompense language serves an individual parenetic purpose. (b) In the OT, particularly in the Deuteronomistic History and the prophets, and in later texts, particularly Josephus, this parenetic

²⁷⁰ Translation by Andersen in *OTP*, vol. 1, p. 177. The long recension is similar. See also 60:4.

²⁷¹ Collins, "The Genre Apocalypse," 533-37 and 544-46.

function is raised to the level of the nation; the fortunes of the people as a whole depend on the covenantal loyalty of individuals and leaders. (c) In the OT and scattered later texts, when an individual comes into conflict with other people, and this conflict cannot be adequately resolved by societal mechanisms, an appeal can be made to the higher court of God's judgment. (d) An extension of (a) above occurs when the individual recompense language shifts to the level of a final or postmortem judgment, as in many hellenistic Jewish and late texts (pseudonymous poetic fragments, Wisdom of Solomon, Josephus, the *Biblical Antiquities* of Pseudo-Philo, 4 Ezra, 2 *Baruch*, Similitudes of 1 *Enoch*, *Sibylline Oracles*, Book 4, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, rabbinic texts, and most strikingly in the *Testament of Abraham* and 2 *Enoch*. Such eschatological recompense language serves the same parenetic function as its this-worldly counterpart.

Second, a belief in God's judgment can serve to define one group over against another group or provide identity and encouragement in the face of a threat. Will the group maintain the courage and loyalty of its members and its distinctiveness under pressure? In this case there is a conflict, crisis, or threat which affects the fortunes of a whole group, not just individuals. To some extent a group is defined by human activities such as war, rituals and other communal activities, or by physical withdrawal from the rest of society. Such mechanisms, however, often need to be supported by the belief that this group has a separate destiny, which is confirmed by the decisive judgment of God. In many Old Testament texts, in some parts of the *Psalms of Solomon*, and in some portions of the Qumran texts such judgment of God can be seen on the plane of history. But more often faith in God's vindication of Israel or a group within it sets its sights on a final resolution at the end of or beyond history. Various situations can be addressed by such a faith in God's judgment: a world afflicted by senseless violence (1 *Enoch* 1-36); persecution (Daniel; 2 and 4 Maccabees; *Testament of Judah* 25; Wisdom of Solomon); strife between opposing Jewish religious groups (Isa. 65-66; Daniel; 1 *Enoch* 83-90; Qumran documents, especially the *pesharim*, CD, and 1QH); oppression of the nation by the Gentiles (Judith; Books 3 and 8 of the *Sibylline Oracles*; *Testament of Moses*; 1QM; *Apocalypse of Abraham*; sections of 4 Ezra and 2 *Baruch*); social oppression (1 *Enoch* 92-105); the desecration of Jewish religious life (*Jubilees* and *Psalms of Solomon*); the utter corruption of the world (Qumran documents, especially 1 QS). In the face of these perceived crises, Jewish authors often call upon faith in the eschatological judgment of God to (1) provide courage and consolation for the victims of violence and oppression (1 *Enoch* 1-36 and 92-105; Daniel; 2 and 4 Maccabees; *Testament of Judah* 25; Wisdom of Solomon); (2) encourage continuing

loyalty to the religious nation or group (Isa 65-66; *Jubilees*; Judith; *1 Enoch* 83-90; *Psalms of Solomon*; 1QM; Books 3 and 8 of the *Sibylline Oracles*; *Testament of Moses*; *Apocalypse of Abraham*; parts of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch); (3) consolidate the boundaries of a sectarian group (Qumran documents, especially the *pesharim*, 1QS, CD, and 1QH).

We have also seen that the language of rewards is especially prominent in individual moral recompense texts. Very rarely, and only in late texts, does the individualistic function of the judgment lead to the clear expression of the conception of differing rewards within the group of the righteous.

From the Old Testament through the latest texts the conception that God knows or reveals the actions and thoughts of people serves to underscore the justice and thoroughness of God's judgment. This conception is particularly used in the OT in individual appeals to God's higher court, where the innocence of the suppliant and guilt of the opponent is often supported by an appeal to God's omniscience. It also finds a place in contexts where the moral recompense of individuals is emphasized, both this-worldly and eschatological. In late texts such as *Testament of Abraham* and *2 Enoch* the individuality of the judgment is supplemented by an elaborate emphasis on the exposure and measurement of individual deeds.

CHAPTER THREE

THE FUNCTIONS OF POSTMORTEM JUDGMENT IN GREEK AND ROMAN TRADITIONS

Students of Paul's judgment language have been remarkably inattentive to the importance of Greco-Roman judgment traditions.¹ In addition to the fact that the material is scattered and has not been extensively studied by classical scholars,² this inattention is due largely to the assumption that since the earliest Christian conceptions were developed along Jewish lines the pagan traditions have little to teach us.³ The Jewish background of NT judgment language is incontrovertible. Yet if we are to explore how Christian teachings on judgment were received

¹ Of twentieth century treatments of judgment in Paul only Gillis P. Wetter (*Der Vergeltungsgedanke bei Paulus*) and Herbert Braun (*Gerichtsgedanke und Rechtfertigungslehre bei Paulus*) devote a few pages to the pagan material, and Braun only to show that it is irrelevant.

² In English there is a chapter in S. G. F. Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead: The Idea of Life After Death in the Major Religions* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), 76-97; also Robert Garland, *The Greek Way of Death* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1985), 60-66. The most thorough collection of the material is by Albrecht Dieterich, *Nekyia: Beiträge zur Erklärung der Neuentdeckten Petrusapokalypse* (3rd ed., reproduced from the 2nd ed. of 1913; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1969). Dieterich's work, however, is somewhat outdated; see the comments of Martha Himmelfarb in *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), 41-44; Himmelfarb's study does not itself cover the Greco-Roman material. Another older study is by Ludovicus Ruhl, "De mortuorum iudicio," in *Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten* 2:2 (1903), 33-105. Studies on Greek religion include some discussion of judgment: Martin P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 512; 2nd ed.; 2 vols.; München: C. H. Beck, 1955 & 1961), vol. 1, 174-99, 672-708, 815-26; vol. 2, 231-42, 543-58; Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 194-99, 293-301. See also studies on the afterlife in general: Erwin Rohde, *Psyche: The Cult of Souls and Belief in Immortality among the Greeks* (Harper Torchbooks; New York: Harper & Row, 1966); Ludwig Radermacher, *Das Jenseits im Mythos der Hellenen: Untersuchungen über Antiken Jenseitsglauben* (Bonn: A. Marcus & E. Weber, 1903); Franz Cumont, *After Life in Roman Paganism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922); W. F. Jackson Knight, *Elysion: On Ancient Greek and Roman Beliefs Concerning a Life after Death* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1970).

³ I leave aside the question of Greek influence on Jewish conceptions, which was undeniably significant. See Francis T. Glasson, *Greek Influence in Jewish Eschatology* (London: SPCK, 1961); Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* vol. 1, 196-202; vol. 2, 130-35.

by pagan converts we need to see what sorts of ideas about judgment were familiar to them, and we must reckon with the possibility that Paul's knowledge of his readers' ways of thinking influenced his use of judgment language.

What follows is my attempt to gather and interpret the data on judgment, keeping the concerns of 1 Corinthians 3-4 in mind. As in the previous chapter on Judaism the focus will be on the ways in which ideas of judgment were used rather than on questions about sources and the development of conceptions. Although I cannot claim to have uncovered all the relevant data, I hope to have gathered enough material to demonstrate that the language and conceptions of postmortem judgment were widely known and used on both the philosophical and popular levels. The investigation is divided into three sections. First, I will look at the classical Greek period as the source for later conceptions. Second, I will focus on the late hellenistic and early Roman uses of judgment language. Late developments, such as Neoplatonic and Neopythagorean interpretations of the ancient myths in the later Roman period (e.g., Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus) are beyond the scope of this study. In a third section I will summarize the ways in which Greco-Roman judgment conceptions were used to emphasize individual attainment of honor rather than corporate identity.

A few clarifications need to be made. This is not an investigation of all pagan beliefs about an afterlife. I am only concerned with texts in which there is a clear differentiation of fates beyond death, a judgment on a moral, ritual, or social basis. Further, the question of the seriousness of belief inevitably arises in dealing with these materials. This issue will call for some attention as we look at the various types of texts, but a preliminary general comment needs to be made here. It is ultimately fruitless to argue whether or not a particular author really believed what he or she wrote with reference to judgment. It is more useful to sidestep the issue of belief by asking two more answerable questions: what are the "beliefs" with which an author is familiar, and what is the function of those "beliefs" in the text? To give a modern example, if someone tells a joke set at "Saint Peter's gates" up in heaven, we may not be able to know to what extent that person believes in the literal reality of those gates. But we can discover that the motif of "Saint Peter's gates" is a conception which most people recognize and understand and that it is most often used in a particular genre of humor. This is the sort of analysis of Greco-Roman judgment traditions which will enable us to gain a fresh vantage point from which to look at Paul's use of judgment language in 1 Cor 3-4.

1. Classical Greek Sources for Conceptions of Postmortem Judgment

Introduction

“Put justice, therefore, above everything else.”⁴ These words serve to remind us, as they did the Athenian jurors to whom they were originally addressed, of the fundamental role of justice in Greek life. The practice of justice by individuals in their private lives and, at least in Athenian democracy, in the public assembly assured order and stability in society.⁵ It was generally believed that, as societal order depended on the practice of righteousness, so individual justice was sanctioned not only by the laws of the city-state but also by divine recompense.

Often it is Zeus or the personified *Dike* who imposes just recompense in this life.⁶ Hesiod says in *Works and Days* 238-39:

But for those who practise violence and cruel deeds far-seeing Zeus,
the son of Cronos, ordains a punishment (δίκην).⁷

Very frequently mentioned is the ability of Zeus and/or *Dike* to see all human deeds and thus to let no individual escape recompense even for things done in secret.⁸ This idea is given a picturesque form by Homer:

Aye, and the gods in the guise of strangers from afar put on all
manner of shapes, and visit the cities, beholding the violence and the
righteousness of men.⁹

Various epithets convey this same idea: “All-seeing Zeus” (εὐρύοπα Ζεύς);¹⁰ “all-seeing *Dike*” (Δίκη πᾶνθ ὁρῶς);¹¹ and “all-seeing Time.”¹²

⁴ (Lysias) 9.22. Translation by W. R. M. Lamb in LCL (1930), 195.

⁵ Martin P. Nilsson, “Die Griechengötter und die Gerechtigkeit,” *HTR* 50 (1957), 193-210.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 200-203. *Dike* is often personified but never had a cult.

⁷ Translation by H. G. Evelyn-White in LCL (1914), 21. See also Aeschylus *Agamemnon*, lines 773-75; *Libation-Bearers*, line 61; Plato, *Laws* 4.716A; Solon, frag. 4, lines 14-16 (in LCL, *Elegy and Iambus*, vol. 1, 119).

⁸ The oversight (ἐποπτεύειν) and recompense of Zeus and *Dike* are the subject of a chapter in Stobaeus, *Eclogues*, Book 1, chap. 3. See Raffaele Pettazoni, *The All-Knowing God: Researches into Early Religion and Culture* (London: Methuen, 1956), 145-62, esp. 145-47. On Zeus and *Dike* in Hesiod see Martin P. Nilsson, *Greek Piety* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1948), 34-35.

⁹ *Odyssey* 17.485-87. Translated by A. T. Murray in LCL, vol. 2 (1919), 187. See also Pindar *Olympian Ode* 1.64.

¹⁰ Hesiod *Works and Days*, lines 229 and 239; see also line 267.

¹¹ Euripides *Electra*, line 771. See also the *Greek Anthology* 7.580.

¹² Sophocles *Oedipus the King*, line 1213. Also two fragments in Augustus Nauck, *Tragicorum graecorum fragmenta* (2nd ed.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1926), adespota #483 and 510, pp. 934 and 939.

Zeus is sometimes seen to write the deeds of people down in books.¹³ Divine knowledge extends beyond outward deeds to inner thoughts, to the heart. Hesiod tells how *Dike* herself sits beside Zeus and tells him of people's wicked hearts.¹⁴ Solon warns that Zeus is always aware of a wicked heart,¹⁵ and Theognis addresses Zeus with the words, "well knowest Thou the heart and mind of every man alive."¹⁶ Xenophon attributes to Socrates the belief that the deity sees and hears all things, a thought which Socrates used to keep his companions from impiety and injustice not only in public but also in private.¹⁷ It follows that there is no escape from the consequences of evil deeds¹⁸ and also that reward is bestowed on those who practise justice:

Verily the blessed gods love not reckless deeds, but they honor justice and the righteous deeds of men.¹⁹

The recompense of God can be appealed to for personal vengeance²⁰ or to back up an oath.²¹ It can be directed against unrighteous gain of wealth,²² perverted judgments,²³ or the unjust rule of kings.²⁴ Athenian forensic orators were fond of warning the jurors that, though their votes are cast in secret, an unrighteous vote will not escape the knowledge and recompense of the gods.²⁵

Such confidence in righteous divine recompense, however, did not escape the questions and doubts of thoughtful people. Homer, while affirming eventual divine recompense, admits that there may be a de-

¹³ Euripides, frag. 506 (Nauck, p. 523). See Nilsson, "Griechengötter und Gerechtigkeit," 201-202; Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 2, 196-97; Ruhl, "De mortuorum iudicio," 101-105; Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, vol. 2, 134, note 603, and vol. 1, 201.

¹⁴ *Works and Days*, lines 248-73; directed against the oppression of rulers.

¹⁵ Solon, frag. 13, lines 25-32 (in LCL, *Elegy and Iambus*, vol. 1, 126-28).

¹⁶ Translation by J. M. Edmonds in LCL, *Elegy and Iambus*, vol. 1 (1931), 275.

¹⁷ Xenophon *Memorabilia* 1.4.17-19. See also 1.1.19, where it is said that the gods know human words, deeds, and secret purposes.

¹⁸ Euripides *Ion*, lines 440-41; Xenophon *Memorabilia* 4.4.21; Herodotus 5.56.

¹⁹ Homer, *Odyssey* 14.83-84. Translated by A. T. Murray in LCL, vol. 2 (1919), 41.

²⁰ See the cry of Philoctetes in Sophocles *Philoctetes*, lines 315-16.

²¹ *Lycurgus Against Leocrates* 79 (in LCL, *Minor Attic Orators*, vol. 2, 72); Xenophon *Cyropaedia* 5.4.31.

²² Solon, frag. 13, lines 7-8 (in LCL, *Elegy and Iambus*, vol. 1, 126).

²³ Homer *Iliad* 16.386-88.

²⁴ Hesiod *Works and Days*, lines 248-73.

²⁵ *Lycurgus Against Leocrates* 146 (in LCL, *Minor Attic Orators*, vol. 2, 128); Demosthenes 19.239; (Demosthenes) 25.11; 59.126.

lay.²⁶ Such delayed recompense may well fall on the evildoer's family and descendants.²⁷ A well-known fragment of Solon reads:

. . . even such is the vengeance of Zeus; He is not quick to wrath, like us, over each and every thing, yet of him that hath a wicked heart is He aware always unceasing, and such an one surely cometh out plain at the last. Aye, one payeth to-day, another to-morrow; and those who themselves flee and escape the pursuing destiny of Heaven, to them vengeance cometh alway again, for the price of their deeds is paid by their innocent children or else by their seed after them.²⁸

By referring to the 'innocent children' Solon voices an implicit criticism of this belief. A direct questioning of divine justice, in view of the prosperity of the wicked, is not unknown. Theognis aims a barb at Zeus: if you really know the heart of every person, then how can you hold the wicked and righteous in the same honor?²⁹

The most striking critique of the belief in divine recompense comes from a fragment of the *Sisyphus* written by Critias, a sometime member of the Socratic circle:

A time there was when anarchy did rule
The lives of men, which then were like the beasts',
Enslaved to force; nor was there then reward
For good men, nor for wicked punishment.
Next, as I deem, did men establish laws
For punishment, that Justice might be lord
Of all mankind, and Insolence enchain'd;
And whosoe'er did sin was penalized.
Next, as the laws did hold men back from deeds
Of open violence, but still such deeds
Were done in secret, —then, as I maintain,
Some shrewd man first, a man in counsel wise,
Discovered unto men the fear of Gods,
Thereby to frighten sinners should they sin
E'en secretly in deed, or word, or thought.
Hence was it that he brought in Deity,
Telling how God enjoys an endless life,
Hears with his mind and sees, and taketh thought
And heeds things, and his nature is divine,

²⁶ *Iliad* 4.160-62. See also a fragment of the tragedian Theodectes (Nauck, #8, p. 804).

²⁷ *Lycurgus Against Leocrates* 79; *Lysias* 6.20. See Kenneth J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California, 1974), 261-62.

²⁸ Frag. 13, lines 25-32. Translation by J. M. Edwards in LCL, *Elegy and Iambus*, vol. 1 (1931), 127-29.

²⁹ Lines 373-92 (in LCL, *Elegy and Iambus*, vol. 1, 275). See also Sophocles, frag. 103 (Nauck, pp. 152-53).

So that he hearkens to men's every word
And has the power to see men's every act.³⁰

This rationalistic account of the rise of laws and of belief in divine omniscience and recompense, though disdaining the fear of gods as a human invention, nevertheless affirms the basic classical Greek view of the function of such beliefs: the restraining of individual insolence and injustice so that anarchy might not prevail.

Homer and the Myths of the Underworld

Alongside belief in a divine recompense in this life there arose among the Greeks images of postmortem judgment, no doubt encouraged by the inadequacies of a purely this-worldly view. Homer played a large role in promoting belief in an afterlife judgment, even though such a view is found in only a very limited sense in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. As a matter of fact, the closest Homer comes to mentioning a postmortem judgment is in this text in the *Iliad* in which Agamemnon speaks an oath:

Father Zeus, that rulest from Ida, most glorious, most great, and thou Sun, that beholdest all things and hearest all things, and ye rivers and thou earth, and ye that in the world below take vengeance on men that are done with life, whosoever hath sworn a false oath; be ye witnesses and watch over the oaths of faith.³¹

This oath formula simply extends the more common notion of divine recompense for oath-breaking to the underworld as well as this world, and there is no indication that a more general judgment of the dead is presupposed.³²

³⁰ Text in Hermann Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker: Griechisch und Deutsch* (7th ed.; Berlin-Charlottenburg: Weidmann, 1954), vol. 2, 386-89. See the comments by Kathleen Freeman, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers: A Companion to Diels, Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (2nd ed.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1959), 412. The fragment was preserved by Sextus Empiricus *Against the Physicists* 1.54 (= *Adv. Math.* 9.54), and the translation quoted is by R. G. Bury in LCL, vol. 3 (1936), 29-33. See also *Against the Physicists* 1.14-16 (= *Adv. Math.* 9.14-16).

³¹ *Iliad* 3.274-80. Translation by A. T. Murray in LCL, vol. 1 (1924), 137. Also 19.258-65.

³² Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 197-98; E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley & Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1951), 137; Cumont, *After Life*, 171. The frequent motif of the weighing of the fate of mortals on scales by the gods (*Iliad* 8.69-71; 16.658; 19.223-24; 22.209-12) is not an image of moral judgment but of divine providence; see Leopold Kretzenbacher, *Die Seelenwaage: Zur religiösen Idee vom Jenseitsgericht auf der Schicksalswaage in Hochreligion, Bildkunst, und Volksglaube* (Klagenfurt: Verlag des Landesmuseums für Kärnten, 1958), 29-36.

The best-known reference by Homer to the underworld is the journey of Odysseus to Hades (*Nekyia*) in *Odyssey*, Book 11. Toward the end of the book Odysseus describes this sight:

There then I saw Minos, the glorious son of Zeus, golden sceptre in hand, giving judgment to the dead (θεμιστεύοντα νέκυσσιν) from his seat, while they sat and stood about the king through the wide-gated house of Hades, and asked of him judgment (δικός).³³

Then Odysseus sees five legendary figures (lines 572-602): Orion with his herds; giant Tityus tied to the ground with vultures gnawing at his liver;³⁴ Tantalus, hungering and thirsting endlessly amidst the repeatedly receding water and fruit trees;³⁵ Sisyphus straining to get the stone up the hill;³⁶ and Heracles, or rather the shade of Heracles, since he himself is banqueting among the gods.³⁷ Contrary to superficial appearances, this is no postmortem judgment scene. Minos, the legendary king and lawgiver of Crete, is simply doing what he is known to do best, governing the underworld. He is not pronouncing sentences on the dead.³⁸ Nor is his "judging" connected in any way with the following descriptions of the legendary punishments. No reason is given for the punishments of Tantalus and Sisyphus. Only concerning Tityus is a reason for his suffering given—his violation of Leto. It is clear that these punishments are regarded as special cases, penalties for offenders against divine prerogatives. The sufferers are not seen as prototypes of the underworld

³³ *Odyssey* 11.567-71. Translation by A. T. Murray in LCL, vol. 1 (1919), 427.

³⁴ On Tityus and his punishment see Apollodorus *Library* 1.4.1.

³⁵ On Tantalus and his punishment see Pindar *Olympian Ode* 1.54-64; Xenophon *Oeconomicus* 21.12; Apollodorus *Epitome* 2.1.

³⁶ Since we are interested particularly in conceptions familiar to people in early Roman Corinth it is worth pointing out that Sisyphus had a close association with that city in legend (see Aelius Aristides 46.29). His grave was known to be on the Isthmus (Pausanias 2.2.2); a shrine in his honor was located in Corinth (Strabo *Geography* 8.6.21; see Pausanias 2.5.1); Sisyphus was one of the legendary kings of Corinth (Pausanias 2.4.3), and he was the one who established the Isthmian Games (Pausanias 2.1.3). Corinth could be called the town of Sisyphus (*Greek Anthology* 9.151). See Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and Archaeology* (Good News Studies 6; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1983), 8-9, 44, 59-60, 117. On Sisyphus and his punishment see Apollodorus *Library* 1.9.3.

³⁷ Because this "judgment" scene has no clear function in the narrative this section was once thought to be an Orphic interpolation, but this hypothesis has more recently been generally rejected; see Hermann Diels, "Himmels- und Höllenfahrten von Homer bis Dante," *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum* 49 (1922), 240; Harold W. Attridge, "Greek and Latin Apocalypses," in *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (ed. John J. Collins; Semeia 14, 1979), 165-66; Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1949), 141-42; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 198; Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 677-78.

³⁸ Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 454 and 677.

fates of people in general.³⁹ Yet, as we shall see, this scene became the basis for a view of judgment in the underworld which long held the imagination of Greek and Roman people.

A sort of positive counterpart of Homer's underworld scene of special punishments is his promise to Menelaus in *Odyssey* 4.561-69 that he would not die but rather be taken to the Elysian plain. Again, this is no model for a general postmortem reward but rather a special privilege granted to Menelaus as the husband of the divine Helen. Unlike other mortals he is to be translated to the paradise of the Elysian plain, where another legendary demi-god, Rhadamanthus, is living.⁴⁰ Minos and Rhadamanthus, who are later to become judges of all mortals in Hades, in Homer are kept separate and have no judging function. This conception of the Elysian plain as the special abode of demi-gods and heroes, a place for unusual honor and glory, is known in other early Greek poets. For Hesiod it takes the form of "islands of the blessed" at the ends of the earth.⁴¹ Pindar speaks of "the homes of bliss"⁴² or the happy fate of kings and heroes in the world below.⁴³ Again, however, in none of these texts is there the idea of a general judgment of the dead.

Although Homer exhibits no conception of a general judgment of the dead, the importance of his images of Hades and Elysium for later pictures of postmortem judgment cannot be ignored. The journey to the underworld, the legislation of Minos, the punishments of the three offenders, the blessings of the Elysian plain, and the role of Rhadamanthus—all these elements will be used as a framework around which to build a conception of a universal moral judgment in Greek (and Roman) tradition.

A Ritual Basis for Judgment--the Eleusinian Mysteries

In the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, which is the *locus classicus* for our knowledge of the mystery rites celebrated at Eleusis, we read:

³⁹ Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 81-85; Rohde, *Psyche*, 40-41.

⁴⁰ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 198; Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 324-29. Nilsson suggests that the Minoan image of a paradise for favored princes has been put together with the original Greek view of Hades as the shadowy afterlife for all people. See also Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 77-78.

⁴¹ Hesiod *Works and Days*, lines 169-73. See Plato *Republic* 7.540B, where it is said that the Guardians of the State will go to the Islands of the Blest. Also see Plutarch *Sentorius* 8.2-3, where he mentions the widespread belief that these islands are located in the Atlantic Ocean.

⁴² Pindar *Nemean Odes* 1.69-72.

⁴³ Pindar *Pythian Odes* 5.94-104.

Happy is he among men upon earth who has seen these mysteries; but he who is uninitiate and who has no part in them, never has lot of like good things once he is dead, down in the darkness and gloom.⁴⁴

Numerous other testimonies affirm that these mysteries promised a better life after death.⁴⁵ The belief seems to have been that the uninitiated would suffer the normal fate of the shadowy existence of Hades while the initiates would be blessed by continuing to celebrate the rites in the underworld.⁴⁶

The fact that the mysteries seemed, at least to skeptical outsiders, to promise a purely ritual rather than a moral basis for this better afterlife was an open invitation to ridicule. In *The Peace* of Aristophanes, Trygaeus, when told he must die, says:

O then, I prithee, lend me half a crown.
I'll buy a pig, and get initiate first.⁴⁷

Plutarch records a Spartan retort to a poverty-stricken priest that, since he would be happier in the afterlife he should die as quickly as possible.⁴⁸ Two versions of a retort by Diogenes are preserved. Plutarch, after quoting the promise of the mysteries recorded by Sophocles has Diogenes come back:

What! Do you mean to say that Pataecion, the robber, will have a better portion after death than Epaminondas, just because he is initiate?⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Lines 480-82. Translated by H. G. Evelyn-White in LCL, *Hesiod, Homeric Hymns and Homerica* (1914), 323.

⁴⁵ Pindar *Dirges*, frag. 137 (LCL, 592-94); Isocrates *Panegyricus* 28: "... the holy rite which inspires in those who partake of it sweeter hopes regarding both the end of life and all eternity. . . ." (translation by George Norlin in LCL, vol. 1 (1928), 135); Sophocles, frag. 753 (Nauck, p. 308). See Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 289; Martin P. Nilsson, *Greek Folk Religion* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1971), 58-59; Harold R. Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration: A Study of Mystery Initiations in the Graeco-Roman World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), 63-64; George E. Mylonas, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 283-85.

⁴⁶ This is the assumption behind the statement in Aristophanes (*The Frogs*, lines 154-58) that Dionysus in his underworld journey will see happy groups of initiates. See also Euripides *Heracles*, line 613. On this see Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 673-74; Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 79-81.

⁴⁷ Lines 374-75. Translation by Benjamin B. Rogers in LCL, vol. 2 (1924), 37.

⁴⁸ Plutarch *Apophthegmata Laconica* 224E. See also Diogenes Laertius 6.4, for a similar retort attributed to Antisthenes.

⁴⁹ Plutarch *De Audiendis Poetis* 21F. Translation by F. C. Babbitt in LCL, vol. 1 (1927), 113. The other version is given in Diogenes Laertius 6.39. See two other fragments of this sort cited by Dover, *Greek Popular Morality*, 262-63.

Although perhaps participation in these mysteries was limited to a small circle, the influence of such ideas about the afterlife seems to have been widespread, popular enough to give Aristophanes fodder for his comic satire.⁵⁰

The Fusion of the Homeric Underworld and a General Moral Judgment

In the fifth century B.C.E. the artist Polygnotus painted in a building at Delphi a portrayal of the *nekyia* of Odysseus. The painting has not been preserved, but Pausanias gives a detailed description of it in Book 10.28-31.⁵¹ In addition to portraying the three Homeric sufferers, Polygnotus showed other punishments: of one person who was unjust to his father and of another who had committed sacrilege. He also showed women carrying water in broken jars and identified them as the uninitiated. The import is clear: Homer's scene is being interpreted as a moral judgment that applies to more than the special cases of demi-gods.

That this view of judgment is no isolated case we can see from the words of the old man Cephalus in Plato, *Republic* 1.330D:

'For let me tell you, Socrates,' he said, 'that when a man begins to realize that he is going to die, he is filled with apprehensions and concern about matters that before did not occur to him. The tales (μῦθοι) that are told of the world below and how the men who have done wrong here must pay the penalty there, though he may have laughed them down hitherto, then begin to torture his soul with the doubt that there may be some truth in them.'⁵²

Democritus likewise testifies that some people "pass their time wretchedly in unrest and anxiety, inventing lying myths about the hereafter."⁵³ Who were the people who were telling these "myths" about moral punishments in Hades?

Diodorus Siculus repeated the answer to this question which, in one

⁵⁰ Diels, "Himmels- und Höllenfahrten," 244-45.

⁵¹ On this painting see Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 815; Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 68-70; Nilsson, *History of Greek Religion*, 218-20; Rohde, *Psyche*, 241-42. See also a series of painted vases from South Italy in the fourth and third centuries B.C.E., described with illustrations in W. K. C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion: A Study of the Orphic Movement* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), 187-91.

⁵² Translation by Paul Shorey in LCL, vol. 1 of the *Republic* (1930), 17.

⁵³ Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, frag. 297, vol. 2, pp. 206-207. Translation by Christian Maurer, "σύνοιδα, κτλ.," in *TDNT*, vol. 7, 902-3. See Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 158 note 13.

form or another, has been most attractive to both the ancients and to modern scholars: it was Orpheus and his followers who instituted mystic rites, taught about punishments in Hades for the impious, and told of the Fields of the Pious.⁵⁴ The whole matter of Orpheus and Orphism, however, is the subject of great scholarly dispute.⁵⁵ Fortunately, for our purposes we can largely bypass the debates over what beliefs can be attributed to an actual Orphic group or set of writings. We can simply look at the results: the widespread testimony in classical Greece to a belief in a moral judgment of individuals after death. It is clear that, as we can see in the painting of Polygnotus at Delphi, Homer's picture of the underworld and the ritual view of afterlife espoused by the Eleusinian mysteries both become fused with a sense of individual moral accountability after death.⁵⁶

Aristophanes illustrates the moral concern in *The Frogs*--with a comic

⁵⁴ Diodorus Siculus 1.96.4-5. To be sure, Diodorus states that Orpheus borrowed all these things from Egypt, a theory which is disputed by modern scholars. See Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 198; Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 816.

⁵⁵ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 296; Larry J. Alderink, *Creation and Salvation in Ancient Orphism* (American Classical Studies 8; Chico: Scholars, 1981), 7-23.

⁵⁶ On Orpheus and Orphism see especially Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*; Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 72-83; M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983); Otto Kern, *Orphicorum fragmenta* (2nd ed. reproduced from the 1st ed. of 1922; Berlin: Weidmann, 1963); Alderink, *Creation and Salvation in Ancient Orphism*. Part of the problem is that in our best early source for Orphism, Plato, it is difficult to disentangle possible Orphic writings, Orphics as a religious group, the role of Eleusinian and Bacchic mysteries, and Pythagorean teachings. It seems clear that Orphism was closely associated with Dionysos and the Bacchic religion (Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, 41), but the relationship with the Eleusinian mysteries is disputed (see Fritz Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens in vorhellenistischer Zeit* [Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 33; Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1974], esp. p. 94). That Orphics and Pythagoreans had much in common in their views of the soul also seems clear. For our purposes the most interesting question is whether there was a common belief in postmortem judgment that did not also involve a teaching of metempsychosis. I believe that, based on the numerous classical testimonies of a judgment that do not mention the soul, there was indeed such a view, whether it can be attributed to the Orphics or not; Alderink (*Creation and Salvation*, 83-84) denies that the Orphics taught metempsychosis. In the view of Burkert there were separate Bacchic, Orphic, and Pythagorean circles which did share some beliefs (*Greek Religion*, 300), but finally it was a Pythagorean (hence, including metempsychosis) version of Orphism which is evident in Pindar and Plato (Walter Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972], 131-33). On the question of Orphic writings see West, *The Orphic Poems*; Alderink, *Creation and Salvation*, 25-51. Well-known are some inscriptions on gold leaves found with burials in southern Italy, Thessaly, and Crete, the earliest dating from around 400 B.C.E. These seem all to quote from a single poem that tells of the path to be followed by the dead in the afterlife; the goal is to be in the Islands of the Blessed, but there is no mention of punishments (texts in Kern, *Orphicorum fragmenta* #32, pp. 104-109; translations in Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, 172-74; see Guthrie, 171-82; Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 84-108; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 293-94).

twist.⁵⁷ Heracles tells Dionysus that in Hades he will see filth and dung into which various wrongdoers are plunged, including one who has copied a speech of Morsimus (lines 145-51). In lines 455-59 the chorus, made up of initiates in Hades, sings about their happiness in the after-life because of their pure lives. Plato says that the mysteries teach that "whoever goes uninitiated and unsanctified to the other world will lie in the mire, but he who arrives there initiated and purified will dwell with the gods."⁵⁸ Both the punishments of being plunged in mud and of endlessly carrying water in a broken vessel to a leaking urn seem to be related to the idea of impurity.⁵⁹ Again, Plato refers to poets who describe rewards for the righteous as an everlasting drunken symposium, "but the impious and the unjust they bury in mud in the house of Hades and compel them to fetch water in a sieve."⁶⁰ Plato's own opinion of these views will be examined below.

Belief in an afterlife judgment on a moral basis, though stated in widely different ways, is also seen in Aeschylus,⁶¹ Demosthenes,⁶² and Isocrates.⁶³ Further, we have a group of four verse inscriptions from Athens in the fourth century B.C.E. which show that a belief in a blessed afterlife because of one's way of life was not uncommon. What is striking about these is the cautious expression of the belief (two of them begin the sentence with "if") and the expression of postmortem reward in terms of praise or honor:

εί τι δικαιοσύ[ν]ης ἄθλον τίθεται κατὰ γαίας, Εὐφανεσ, οὐ χαλε-
πὸν τοῦδε σὲ πρῶτα λαβεῖν. If there is any prize awarded under the
earth for righteousness, Euphanes, it is not difficult for you to win
there the first prize.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 86-87; Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 817-18; Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 70-72.

⁵⁸ *Phaedo* 69C. Translation by H. N. Fowler in LCL, vol. 1 (1914), 241. See also Diogenes' reference to what the mysteries teach about the mire and the Islands of the Blest, in Diogenes Laertius 6.39.

⁵⁹ Nilsson, *History of Greek Religion*, 218-19; Guthrie, *Orpheus*, 162; Mylonas, *Eleusis*, 267. See a fragment of Philetairos cited by Dover, *Greek Popular Morality*, 263.

⁶⁰ *Plato Republic* 2.363C-D. Translation by Paul Shorey in LCL, vol. 1 of the *Republic* (1930), 131. See also *Gorgias* 493B.

⁶¹ *Eumenides*, lines 267-75 and 339-40; *Suppliant Maidens*, lines 228-32 and 413-15.

⁶² *Oration* 24.104; (Demosthenes) 25.52-53.

⁶³ *On the Peace* 33-34. See also *To Philip* 134.

⁶⁴ Werner Peek, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften*, vol. 1: *Grab-Epigramme* (Berlin: Akademie, 1955), #1686. Hereafter abbreviated as GVI. The translation is my own with reference to the German translation by Werner Peek, *Griechische Grabgedichte: Griechisch und Deutsch* (Schriften und Quellen der Alten Welt 7; Berlin: Akademie, 1960), #71. Hereafter abbreviated as GG.

εἰ δέ τις εὐσεβίας παρὰ Φερσεφόνει χάρις ἐστίν, καὶ σοὶ τῆσδε
μέρος δῶκε Τύχη φθιμένει.

If there is any grace for piety where Persephone is, Tyche has given
you your share after death.⁶⁵

A third epitaph speaks of the blameless life of the deceased and says that he is to be received in honor by the chthonic gods.⁶⁶ The fourth states that Anthippe has won the highest praise (ἔπαινον) among humans and that she has this praise still after her death (this could refer to her lasting remembrance rather than to a postmortem existence).⁶⁷ It is not surprising that gravestones should mention only the positive side of judgment. Yet it is striking how the proclamation of a blessed afterlife is a means of praising the individual to the community.

A similar view of judgment can be seen in some examples of Athenian funeral speeches for battle casualties, in which praise for the dead is the most prominent theme. One surviving example was delivered by Hyperides in 322 B.C.E.⁶⁸ As part of his praise for the conduct of these soldiers Hyperides tells how they will be welcomed in Hades by the heroes of old (35-40) and says toward the end of the speech:

But if in Hades we are conscious still and cared for by some god, as we are led to think, then surely those who defended the worship of the gods, when it was being overthrown, must receive from him the greatest care of all. . . .⁶⁹

In a similar vein the funeral speech under the name of Demosthenes declares:

With excellent reason one might declare them to be now seated beside the gods below, possessing the same rank as the brave men who have preceded them in the islands of the blest. For though no man has been there to see or brought back this report concerning them, yet those whom the living have assumed to be worthy of honours in the world

⁶⁵ Peek, *GVI*, #1491; *GG*, #88. Translation by Richmond Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1942), 59.

⁶⁶ Peek, *GVI*, #1689. See Dover, *Greek Popular Morality*, 265.

⁶⁷ Peek, *GVI*, #1705; *GG*, #73.

⁶⁸ J. O. Burtt, in his introduction to the speech of Hyperides in *LCL*, *Minor Attic Orators*, vol. 2 (1954), 532-34.

⁶⁹ Section 43. Translated by J. O. Burtt in *LCL*, *Minor Attic Orators*, vol. 2 (1954), 559.

above, these we believe, basing our surmise on their fame, receive the same honours also in the world beyond.⁷⁰

The epitaphs and these speeches point to a view that there is a correspondence and continuity between the praises for virtue won in this life and the honors bestowed on individuals by the gods after death. To speak of the dead in this way is the highest form of praise.

The Judgment of the Soul

The development of the idea of an immortal soul that is distinct from the body is inextricably connected with the names of Orpheus and Pythagoras.⁷¹ The historical Pythagoras and early Pythagorean teaching, however, are shrouded in mist no less than Orpheus and early Orphism. Pythagoras may have taught that souls migrate in fixed succession through a cycle of animal and human incarnations without any dependence on moral behavior.⁷² All ancient traditions about Pythagoras, however, agree that the early Pythagoreans taught that the soul's transmigrations were dependent on the moral character of the life carried out in the bodies.⁷³ At this point there is a convergence between Orphic and Pythagorean

⁷⁰ (Demosthenes) 60.34. Translation by Norman W. DeWitt and Norman J. DeWitt in LCL, vol. 7 (1949), 33-35. Other extant classical funeral speeches: Pericles in Thucydides 2.35-46, who speaks of the everlasting remembrance of their praise and glory (2.43.2); (Lysias), who speaks of their immortal memory because of virtue (2.80-81); Plato *Menexenus*, in which Socrates pokes fun at those orators who can in funeral speeches praise even worthless soldiers in a way that can make them imagine that they are in the Islands of the Blessed. See also Simonides, frag. 21 (in LCL, *Lyra Graeca*, vol. 2, 288-89), who praises those who died at Thermopylae.

⁷¹ "That Pythagoras taught the doctrine of metempsychosis is generally regarded, and rightly, as the one most certain fact in the history of early Pythagoreanism." (Burkert, *Lore and Science*, 120) See Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 691-95.

⁷² This is the opinion of Walter Stettner, *Die Seelenwanderung bei den Griechen und Römern* (Tübinger Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 22; Stuttgart & Berlin: W. Kohlhammer, 1934), 10, 12, and 19. Herodotus (2.123) records such a non-moral view of metempsychosis, but he attributes it to Egypt, not to Pythagoras.

⁷³ Herbert Straine Long, *A Study of the Doctrine of Metempsychosis in Greece from Pythagoras to Plato* (Princeton, N.J., 1948), 26-28. The earliest piece of evidence about Pythagoras (from Xenophanes, in Diogenes Laertius 8.36; see Burkert, *Lore and Science*, 120) alludes to metempsychosis in a way too brief to tell much about it. But the famous account of the migrations of the soul of Pythagoras by Heraclides Ponticus (in Diogenes Laertius 8.4) includes mention of all that Pythagoras' soul underwent in Hades and all that other souls there must endure. See also Diogenes Laertius 8.31 and 35; Aristotle *Posterior Analytics* 2.11 (p. 94b); Iamblichus *De Vita Pythagorica* 28.155; 30.178-79. See Nilsson, *Greek Piety*, 32; Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 29-30.

beliefs.⁷⁴ The underworld becomes a temporary place for repeated punishments and purifications, transmigration is seen as a penalty and testing, and the Islands of the Blest or the Elysian Plain become the final goal of the whole process, where the soul finally attains freedom from the everlasting cycle of rebirths.⁷⁵

We get a glimpse of this view of metempsychosis in the process of formation in fragments of Empedocles' religious poem "Purifications."⁷⁶ He tells in the first person of his *daemon* which for an offense is forced to wander apart from the blessed for 30,000 seasons in various trans-migrations, including that of Empedocles. There are regions beneath the earth where souls are sent between incarnations to be chastened and corrected. If the *daemon* keeps itself pure it will be born into the highest class of people, such as prophets and singers, and then will resume its lost divinity, freed at last from grief and hurt.⁷⁷

The lyric poet Pindar put these views of judgment into a form which held the imagination of succeeding generations.⁷⁸ The fullest expression comes in his second *Olympian Ode* 57-77:

. . . immediately after death, on earth, it is the lawless spirits that suffer punishment,—and the sins committed in this realm of Zeus are judged by One who passeth sentence stern and inevitable; while the good, having the sun shining for evermore. . . receive the boon of a life of lightened toil. . . but in the presence of the honoured gods, all who were wont to rejoice in keeping their oaths, share a life that knoweth no tears, while the others endure labour that none can look upon,—But, whosoever, while dwelling in either world, have thrice been courageous in keeping their souls pure from all deeds of wrong, pass by the highway of Zeus unto the tower of Cronus, where the ocean-breezes blow around the Islands of the Blest. . . according to the righteous councils of Rhadamanthys. . .⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Burkert, *Lore and Science*, 125; Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 701-702 and 707. Stettner (*Seelenwanderung*, 19-20) agrees that at some fairly early point the early non-moral view was changed by becoming connected with views of judgment. See Guthrie, *Orpheus*, 220; Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 299-300; Alderink, *Creation and Salvation*, 78.

⁷⁵ Guthrie, *Orpheus*, 157, 164, and 185; Nilsson, *Greek Piety*, 27; Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 21; Nilsson, *History of Greek Religion*, 221-22.

⁷⁶ καθαρτοι, in Diels, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, vol. 1, frags. 112-47, pp. 354-70.

⁷⁷ See Freeman, *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, 200-202; Guthrie, *Orpheus*, 169; Rohde, *Psyche*, 381; Long, *Doctrine of Metempsychosis*, 45-62; Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 108-109.

⁷⁸ E.g., the author of the *Consolatio ad Apollonium* under the name of Plutarch uses Pindar.

⁷⁹ Translation by John Sandys in LCL (1937), 23-25. On this see Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 299; Long, *Doctrine of Metempsychosis*, 43.

The point of these words is that after death the soul's next fate depends on the moral quality of its previous life and that those who repeat the cycle of rebirth three times in purity attain to the goal of bliss. In another poem, a dirge quoted by Plato, Pindar speaks of a nine year period between incarnations, a period spent paying penalties, after which the souls come into being as rulers and the wise.⁸⁰

It was Plato who combined the ideas of underworld judgment and metempsychosis into a powerful expression of a quest for purity and divinity which profoundly influenced subsequent religion and philosophy. Plato finds fault with those priests who go to the doors of the rich and offer rites to expiate misdeeds and assure a deliverance from the evils of the underworld.⁸¹ To Plato such a possibility invites abuse at the expense of a just life. Yet Plato obviously owes much to the teachings of the mysteries and the poets, finding in them a source for teaching about the importance of a moral life, although he sees that some of their imagery needs to be interpreted symbolically.⁸² In the *Apology* Plato sets forth a tentative view of postmortem judgment (without metempsychosis) as part of Socrates' argument that for a good person there can be no evil after death:

For if a man when he reaches the other world, after leaving behind these who claim to be judges, shall find those who are really judges who are said to sit in judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus, and Aeacus and Triptolemus, and all the other demigods who were just men in their lives, would the change of habitation be undesirable?⁸³

⁸⁰ Frag. 133 (in LCL, p. 593). Also frags. 129-131. On Pindar see Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 109-12.

⁸¹ *Republic* 2.364B-366B. See Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 297; Burkert, *Lore and Science*, 125.

⁸² See *Phaedo* 69C; *Laws* 9.870D-E; *Meno* 81B-C (referring to Pindar and metempsychosis). See also *Gorgias* 493B; *Republic* 2.363C-E; *Cratylus* 400C, which mentions Orphic poets.

⁸³ *Apology* 41A. Translation by H. M. Fowler in LCL, vol. 1 (1914), 143; see also 29B and 41D. In *Crito* 54B-C Socrates uses a warning about postmortem judgment to discourage an unjust response to injustice. The mention of four judges in the *Apology* is the earliest text which brings Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Aeacus together as underworld judges (Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 821-22). Triptolemus, associated with Eleusis and Demeter, appears as part of this group of judges only here. Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Aeacus are known together for their virtue and justice (Isocrates *Panathenaicus* 205; Demosthenes 18.127; Plutarch *Theseus* 16.3). On Aeacus see Isocrates *Evagoras* 15, and Ovid *Metamorphoses* 13.25-28. On Rhadamanthus see Apollodorus *Library* 3.1.2, and Diodorus Siculus 5.79.2. On Minos see Propertius *Elegies* 3.19.27-28, and Philostratus *Life of Apollonius* 3.25.

Plato, however, wants a more positive means of expressing the quest for individual righteousness, and he finds this by combining the idea of the soul's immortality with the picture of a cycle of rebirths determined on a moral basis.⁸⁴ This view Plato sets forth briefly in *Meno* 81B-C as the ground for living as righteously as possible. It is in the four great myths of the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, and *Republic*, Book 10, that Plato's views find their fullest and most compelling exposition.⁸⁵

In *Gorgias* 523A-526C Socrates presents an account about which he claims to be persuaded (526D), even though others might regard it as a myth (μῦθος; 527A). There are two paths for the soul after death: one to the Islands of the Blest, the other to Tartarus. For some souls the punishments in the underworld serve to work a cure. Some, however, are incurable—their tortures serve only as a warning example to others. Most of these are rulers and government officials. The majority of the common people are curable. The souls of philosophers are sent to the Islands of the Blest (526C). The point of this account is that one should strive to be righteous and good (526D-E).

In the *Phaedrus* Plato tells of the soul's attempt to see the truth and attain divinity (246A-249D). Some souls ascending to heaven fall back down through forgetfulness and evil and enter into various sorts of humans (248C-E). In these states, "whoever lives justly obtains a better lot, and whoever lives unjustly, a worse (248E)."⁸⁶ Philosophers alone, if they have chosen this calling for three periods, go their way to eternal blessedness. The rest receive judgment, some sent for punishments under the earth and others raised to a heavenly place. After a thousand years they choose a second life. Here more clearly than in the *Gorgias* the quest of the soul for divinity through a series of incarnations is determined by one's separation from human interests and by attention to the divine (249D).

Early in the *Phaedo* Plato has Socrates express his hope that the afterlife will bring "something better for the good than for the wicked."⁸⁷ After alluding to an ancient tradition about metempsychosis (70C) Socrates speaks of it in three succeeding sections, each time treating the judgment of the soul in more detail (81D-82B; 107C-108C; 112A-114C). In the final description he tells how some whose lives have been neither good nor evil go to be purified and receive penalties or rewards (113D-

⁸⁴ On metempsychosis in Plato see Long, *Doctrine of Metempsychosis*, 63-86, and Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 31-41.

⁸⁵ Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 820. On these myths see Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 113-19; Alderink, *Creation and Salvation*, 74-78.

⁸⁶ Translation by H. N. Fowler in LCL, vol. 1 (1914), 481.

⁸⁷ 63C. Translation by H. N. Fowler in LCL, vol. 1 (1914), 221. See also 95C.

E); others are incurable in wickedness and are cast into Tartarus forever (113E); a third group is made up of great sinners who are yet curable—these are cast into Tartarus for a limited time (113E-114B); a fourth group consists of those who have lived pure lives—these pass, without bodies, into eternal beautiful homes (114B-C). Socrates then concludes:

But, Simmias, because of all these things which we have recounted we ought to do our best to acquire virtue and wisdom in life. For the prize is fair and the hope great.⁸⁸

The most elaborate myth of all is the famous "Myth of Er" in *Republic*, Book 10. This is introduced as an answer to the question of what rewards are in store for lives of virtue and justice, not only in life but also after death (608C-D; 614A), even though the soul ought to practise justice apart from any anticipation of reward (612B-C; 613B). The soldier Er tells what he saw when his soul separated from his body as he was left for dead on the battlefield, only to revive later (614B-621D). In addition to complex cosmic details he sees the judgment of souls. He also sees the souls which have returned from their periods of torments or delights and how they must then choose their next destiny. At this point the process differs from what Plato had described in the other myths. Here philosophy helps the soul choose its next destiny—a choice which is not predetermined by its former life. Plato concludes that a person guided by these beliefs will "pursue righteousness with wisdom always and ever, that we may be dear to ourselves and to the gods both during our sojourn here and when we receive our reward."⁸⁹

How "seriously" does Plato take these myths of the judgment of the soul? The best indication is this direct statement in *Phaedo* 114D:

Now it would not be fitting for a man of sense to maintain that all this is just as I have described it, but that this or something like it is true concerning our souls and their abodes, since the soul is shown to be immortal, I think he may properly and worthily venture to believe; for the venture is well worth while; and he ought to repeat such things to himself as if they were magic charms. . . .⁹⁰

⁸⁸ 114C. Translation by H. N. Fowler in LCL, vol. 1 (1914), 391. See also 114E-115A.

⁸⁹ 621C-D. Translation by Paul Shorey in LCL, vol. 2 of *Republic* (1935), 519-21. On this myth see Hans Dieter Betz, "The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre in Greek and Hellenistic Literature: The Case of the Oracle of Trophonius," in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, 586-88. Plato refers to the judgment of the soul in a briefer manner also in Letter 7.335A-B; *Laws* 9.880E-881B; and, in what is probably his final statement of belief, in *Laws* 10.904D-905B; see Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 221.

⁹⁰ Translation by H. N. Fowler in LCL, vol. 1 (1914), 391. See James Adam, *The Republic of Plato* (2nd ed.; 2 vols.; Cambridge: University Press, 1965 and 1963), vol. 2, 456.

There is a certain playfulness in these myths,⁹¹ and they are certainly not consistent with one another in detail. Plato recognizes that these stories of the soul go beyond rational argument and enter the realm of faith. Yet they confront people with their deepest fears and longings and compel them to make a choice between a wicked and a good life.⁹² The myths have a parenetic purpose.⁹³ Plato says elsewhere that myths and even falsehoods can be useful to lead people to the right way of living.⁹⁴

Plato uses these stories of the transmigration and judgment of souls as a means to lead people by both fear and longing to the life of philosophy, an ethical life based on knowledge and the attention to things divine.⁹⁵ Basic for Plato is the individual's quest for righteousness, and in Plato the belief in metempsychosis is given its highest ethical expression by combining it with images of the underworld and judgment.⁹⁶ For Plato the belief in postmortem judgment serves to educate and purify the soul.⁹⁷

Summary and Conclusions

It may be true that the earliest traces of Greek beliefs in an afterlife—conceptions of special destinies for noble heroes or mystery initiates—had little ethical content.⁹⁸ Yet the forms of postmortem judgment which classical Greece bequeathed to later antiquity were clearly focused on the pursuit of individual righteousness.⁹⁹ Two dominant images of judgment emerged for later Greeks and Romans to use. First was the mythology of the underworld as set forth above all by Homer. Though in Homer there is no view of a general postmortem judgment, the portrayal of Minos and of the three sufferers provided a rich mine of material for the popular and poetic imagination. Second was the belief in the transmigration and judgment of the soul as set forth above all by Pindar and Plato. By his poetic and logical skill Plato managed to gather into his

⁹¹ Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 199.

⁹² Betz, "The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre," 588.

⁹³ Hans Dieter Betz, Peter A. Dirkse, and Edgar W. Smith, Jr., "De sera numinis vindicta," in *Plutarch's Theological Writings and Early Christian Literature* (ed. Hans Dieter Betz; SCHNT 3; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 182.

⁹⁴ *Republic* 2.376E-377C and 382C-D; 3.389B; *Laws* 2.663D-664A. See also *Laws* 9.870D-E. Also Euripides *Electra*, lines 740-46, on the function of φοβεροὶ μύθοι.

⁹⁵ Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 41.

⁹⁶ Long, *Doctrine of Metempsychosis*, 86.

⁹⁷ Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 821.

⁹⁸ Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 80-81.

⁹⁹ Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 1, 823.

picture both the more purely ritual ideas of the mysteries and the more popular aspects of the underworld mythology. The genius of this combination of metempsychosis with judgment is that the underworld punishment is not regarded as definitive and final but is part of a process of education and purification.¹⁰⁰ Probably for most people the more lurid details of underworld punishments held a greater fascination than did Plato's sophisticated myths of the soul.¹⁰¹ Yet Plato had shown a way in which postmortem judgment could be made to serve a philosophical agenda.

2. *The Use of Judgment Traditions in Hellenistic and Roman Times*

When Plutarch in the late first century C.E. wrote his dialogue *De sera numinis vindicta* (*On the Delays of the Divine Vengeance*) he was defending a conception that had continued to have wide currency, that human deeds will receive appropriate divine recompense in this life. Plutarch's was a philosophical argument directed against Epicurean criticisms of divine providence,¹⁰² but belief in divine recompense could also be expressed in the writing of history,¹⁰³ comedy,¹⁰⁴ fable,¹⁰⁵ and romantic novels.¹⁰⁶ A hope for reward and punishment in this life continued to motivate many people of the hellenistic age and the early Roman Empire. Yet, as Plutarch himself illustrates, the idea of postmortem judgment also continued to flourish. In what follows I hope to document both the fact of continued belief in some form of recompense after death and the varieties of functions which the language of postmortem judgment served.

The Evidence for the Popularity of Postmortem Judgment Ideas

When one surveys the literature for references to postmortem judgment, what is most immediately striking are the denials of the reality

¹⁰⁰ Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, 151.

¹⁰¹ Dover, *Greek Popular Morality*, 262. See also Garland (*The Greek Way of Death*, 60-66), who does not think that popular thinking was much influenced by ideas of postmortem retribution.

¹⁰² On this argument see Jerome Neyrey, "The Form and Background of the Polemic in 2 Peter" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale, 1977), 169-90. See also Plutarch *Adversus Colotem* 112E-F and *Quaestiones Convivales* 719B.

¹⁰³ Polybius *Histories* 1.84.10-11; Diodorus Siculus 20.65 and 70; 34/35.2.47.

¹⁰⁴ Plautus *Rudens*, prologue, lines 1-30.

¹⁰⁵ Babrius *Fables* 127.

¹⁰⁶ Chariton *Chaereas and Callirhoe* 1.10 and 3.7; Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 1.14 and 8.9.

of the underworld and its terrors by the "cultured despisers" of such mythological fancies.¹⁰⁷ The Epicureans were in the forefront of such denials;¹⁰⁸ Lucretius in *De Rerum Natura* 3.978-1023 gives at once a vehement denial of the reality of Tantalus, Tityus, Sisyphus and the rest of the underground attractions and a psychological reinterpretation of these myths as the hell on earth caused by a guilty conscience.¹⁰⁹ Cicero attributes the invention of the terrors of the world below to ignorance (*Tusc. Disp.* 1.36-37) and the imaginations of poets and painters (*Tusc. Disp.* 1.9-11).¹¹⁰ Juvenal puts it more crudely:

That there are such things as Manes, and kingdoms below ground, and punt-holes, and Stygian pools black with frogs, and all those thousands crossing over in a single bark—these things not even boys believe, except such as have not yet had their penny bath.¹¹¹

Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 15.153-75) and the anonymous poet of the *Aetna* (lines 74-84)¹¹² join the chorus of mockery. Seneca also dismisses as fancies of the poets the general belief of the people in the terrors of the world below.¹¹³ Among Greek writers, the Skeptic Sextus Empiricus notes the inconsistencies of the legends of Hades.¹¹⁴ Plutarch in arguing against the Epicurean view agrees with it at least in this respect—the tales of Hades are the fabulous teaching only of mothers and nurses.¹¹⁵ Lucian satirizes the crowd of people who are taken in by the underworld myths of Homer and Hesiod.¹¹⁶ All these witnesses together leave no doubt—the educated elite of Greco-Roman society could not believe in the reality of the mythical judgments of the Greek underworld.

A number of factors, however, make it clear that beliefs in postmortem judgment did continue to have widespread effect on the thinking of people, despite the mockery of the sophisticates. First, as these testimo-

¹⁰⁷ Wilfred L. Knox, *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles* (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), 125.

¹⁰⁸ Cumont, *After Life*, 9.

¹⁰⁹ See also the thanksgiving to Epicurus for removing these fears of the underworld by Diogenes of Oenoanda, frag. 14. See the comment by C. W. Chilton, *Diogenes of Oenoanda, The Fragments: A Translation and Commentary* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1971), 58.

¹¹⁰ See also *De Natura Deorum* 2.5; *In Catilinam* 4.8.

¹¹¹ Juvenal *Satires* 2.149-152. Translation by G. G. Ramsay in LCL (1940), 29-31.

¹¹² Written in the early first century C.E. and once attributed to Virgil; found in LCL, *Minor Latin Poets*.

¹¹³ *Epistulae Morales* 24.18 and 117.6; *Ad Marciam de Consolatione* 19.4. See also *Naturales Quaestiones* 5.15.4, and *Troades*, lines 371-408.

¹¹⁴ *Against the Physicists* 1.14-16 and 67-71; *Against the Professors* 1.286.

¹¹⁵ *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* 1105A-B. See also *De Audiendis Poetis* 17A-C, and *De Superstitione* 166F-167A.

¹¹⁶ *On Funerals* 10. See also Pausanias 2.5.1.

nies of this rather limited group of philosophers presuppose, the myths of the underworld continued to enjoy great popularity among the people of less education.¹¹⁷ Second, even some philosophers recognized the usefulness of the fears of judgment for society as a whole, even if they regarded themselves as beyond the need for such a means of motivation.¹¹⁸ Third, what these teachers reject is only the myths of the underworld as handed on by Homer and others; sometimes these gross views are rejected only in order to make room for a more sophisticated view of postmortem judgment--the fate of the soul.

As a matter of fact, the positive evidence for the vitality of postmortem judgment language in the hellenistic and Roman periods is quite widespread. The Eleusinian mysteries continued to advertise a better life after death for the initiates.¹¹⁹ Homeric mythology was used positively, especially by Latin poets (Virgil, Horace, Propertius, Ovid, Seneca in his tragedies, Martial, and Statius). Lucian found these Homeric images useful in his social satire. The Platonic visions of the judgment of the soul were used and interpreted by the author of the pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus*, the author of a work on the soul attributed to Timaeus of Locri, Cicero in his "Dream of Scipio",¹²⁰ Virgil in Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, and above all by Plutarch.¹²¹ Verse epitaphs throughout our period refer in numerous ways to a belief in postmortem judgment. Cicero includes this statement among ordinary beliefs or opinions: "Punishment awaits the wicked in the next world."¹²² Josephus tells us that the Essene beliefs in postmortem judgment were similar to those of the Greeks (*Jewish War* 2.154-58), and some Jewish apocalypses show the influence of Greek conceptions of judgment. Lactantius in discussing the Christian views of judgment draws heavily on pagan authors (*Divine Institutes* 7.20-24). Justin Martyr explicitly compares Christ as judge of the wicked to what Plato says about Rhadamanthus and Minos (*First Apology*, Chap. 8). Origen refers to "Grecian accounts, which taught the existence of courts of justice under the earth," and he reports Celsus as saying:

¹¹⁷ Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 2, 231, 304, 549-50; Cumont, *After Life*, 86; Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 86-87; Rohde, *Psyche*, 535-36.

¹¹⁸ Eduard Norden, *P. Vergilius Maro Aeneis Buch VI* (2nd ed; Leipzig & Berlin: Teubner, 1916), 3; Matthias Baltes, *Timaios Lokros, Über die Natur des Kosmos und der Seele, kommentiert* (*Philosophia Antiqua* 21; Leiden: Brill, 1972), 241.

¹¹⁹ Aelius Aristides *Orations* 1.341 and 22.10; Cicero *Laws* 2.36; Origen *Against Celsus* 8.48. See also Plutarch, frag. 178.

¹²⁰ In *De Re Publica*, Book 6. Cicero was probably indebted to Posidonius for this Platonic element. See Edwyn R. Bevan, *Later Greek Religion* (London & Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1927), XXVI; Knight, *Elysion*, 120.

¹²¹ Diels, "Himmels- und Höllenfahrten," 246-47.

¹²² Cicero *De Inventione* 1.46. Translation by H. M. Hubbell in LCL, vol. 2 (1949), 87.

Forbid that either I, or these, or any other individual should ever reject the doctrine respecting the future punishment of the wicked and the reward of the good!¹²³

Above all, the elaborate imagery of underworld judgment in the *Apocalypse of Peter* borrows heavily from Greek traditions.¹²⁴ Ideas of the judgment of the soul found their way into popular religion, as we can see in the *Corpus Hermeticum* (*Asclepius* 3.11-12; 10.28; *Kore Kosmou* 39 and 62). It is at least clear that the language of postmortem judgment was well-known and used in popular thinking, in philosophy, and in religion. It remains to be seen what actual functions this language played.

It must be admitted, however, that hellenistic and Roman philosophy found little use for the language of postmortem judgment, except for those writings influenced by Plato's myths. The revival of Pythagoreanism which began in the first century B.C.E. has left no witness to a belief in judgment and metempsychosis that can be distinguished from the Platonic myths.¹²⁵ Aristotle had no interest in postmortem judgment, although two of his students in the Peripatetic school, Heraclides Ponticus and Clearchus, both influenced by Plato, do make some mention of a judgment of the soul.¹²⁶ The Epicurean and Skeptic rejection of beliefs in judgment has been mentioned above.¹²⁷ The Cynic and Stoic moral philosophical tradition did not make much use of postmortem judgment language. The Cynics Antisthenes and Diogenes are both recorded to have ridiculed the claim of the mysteries that initiates will fare better

¹²³ *Against Celsus* 3.16. Translation in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4, 470.

¹²⁴ As demonstrated by Dieterich, *Nekyia*. See Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 94.

¹²⁵ See Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 143-44. On the importance of metempsychosis in the merged Neoplatonic and Neopythagorean systems from the late second century C.E. and later see Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 67-88. Diogenes Laertius 8.31 (depending on Alexander Polyhistor) says that Pythagoras taught the separation of pure souls from the impure.

¹²⁶ Heraclides Ponticus, a fourth century B.C.E. student of both Plato and Aristotle, wrote a work titled "Concerning the Things in Hades" (Diogenes Laertius 5.87), which is not extant. Another fragment tells of the experience of Empedotimus, who sees a Hades located in the heavens which has three different doors for the dead (Fritz Wehrli, *Heraclides Pontikos*, in *Die Schule des Aristoteles*, vol. 7 [Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1953], frag. 93, p. 33; see Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, vol. 1, 211). Clearchus (about 340-250 B.C.E.) in a work "Concerning Sleep" holds that in dreams and near-death experiences one can learn of the experience of the soul after death (Fritz Wehrli, *Klearchos*, in *Die Schule des Aristoteles*, vol. 3 [Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1948], 47-48). He tells the story of a certain Cleonymus who fainted and was presumed to be dead but recovered and told what he had seen. He came to a holy country in the West where he saw punishments of souls and judgments and the Eumenides who oversee these things (frag. 8, pp. 11-12).

¹²⁷ See also Ruhl, "De mortuorum iudicio," 75-76.

after death.¹²⁸ Antisthenes is reported to have taught that immortality depends on a pious and just life (Diogenes Laertius 6.5). Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, is said by Lactantius to have taught

that there was a hell, and that the abodes of the just were separated from the wicked, and that the former inhabited quiet and delightful regions, while the latter paid their penalty in dark places and horrible caverns of mud.¹²⁹

If Zeno taught such an idea, however, it found little place in his successors. Chrysippus is said to have taught that only the souls of the wise survive until the conflagration (Diogenes Laertius 7.157). Plutarch accuses Chrysippus of self-contradictions regarding divine recompense in this life but makes no mention of any teaching on postmortem judgment.¹³⁰ It is generally thought that, if the later Stoic Posidonius is the source of Cicero's ideas about the soul in the "Dream of Scipio," then he combined these Platonic elements with his Stoicism to form a teaching of reincarnation based on moral achievement.¹³¹

These few hints, however, are in contrast to the vast majority of moral philosophers who make no use of postmortem judgment in their extant writings: Teles, the Cynic Letters,¹³² the Tabula of Cebes, Seneca, Musonius Rufus, Dio Chrysostom, Epictetus,¹³³ Marcus Aurelius, Maximus of Tyre (in spite of his Platonism). Seneca is an interesting case, for he displays a great love for the mythological lore of underworld judgment in his tragedies,¹³⁴ but he makes no positive use of judgment in his philosophical writings. It should also be noted that the Stoic teaching of a universal conflagration which will lead to a renewal of the universe has no connection with judgment, since all people alike will be de-

¹²⁸ Diogenes Laertius 6.4 and 39. See also the saying of Bion in Diogenes Laertius 4.50.

¹²⁹ Lactantius *Divine Institutes* 7.7.20. Translation by Mary Francis McDonald in *The Fathers of the Church* 49 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1964), 492. Text in Hans Friedrich August von Arnim, *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, vol. 1 (Leipzig & Berlin: Teubner, 1923), #147, p. 40. On Zeno and the Stoics on judgment see Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 140-41.

¹³⁰ *De Stoicorum Repugnantiis* 1040A-C. See also von Arnim, *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, vol. 2, #1176.

¹³¹ Knight, *Elysion*, 120; Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 65-66.

¹³² I find only a passing reference to judgment in the *Socratic Epistles* 25.6-7 (Abraham J. Malherbe, ed., *The Cynic Epistles* [SBLBS 12; Scholars Press, 1977], 278-79).

¹³³ A vague possible reference to judgment is found in Epictetus Diss. 3.5.7-11.

¹³⁴ *Hercules Furens*, lines 579-81 and 727-59; *Thyestes*, lines 1-23; *Agamemnon*, lines 23-24; *Hercules Oetaeus*, lines 934-1011 and 1061-1089.

stroyed.¹³⁵ There is no doubt that at the time of Paul pagan moral philosophy could get along quite well without the motivation of postmortem judgment. In the words of Seneca: "The reward of virtuous acts lies in the acts themselves."¹³⁶

We can conclude, then, that the vitality of the use of postmortem judgment traditions was maintained by the influence of Homeric mythology in the popular realm, of the Greek mysteries in the religious realm, and of Plato in the philosophical realm. Other schools of philosophy either rejected such beliefs or found little use for them. Still, there is no doubt that an inhabitant of Corinth in the mid-first century C.E. would have at least been familiar with some conception, whether Homeric or Platonic, of a judgment for individuals after death.

Functions of Postmortem Judgment Language

Poetic

Here is to be considered a widely varied group of texts, many of them from Latin poets, that have in common only that details of the Greek underworld are used for aesthetic purposes. A number of texts refer to the legendary sufferers of Hades. Horace compares their great longings to the desire to have one's life come to an end (*Epode* 17). Aelius Aristides uses the Sisyphean labors of the condemned in Hades as an image of unending struggle (*Oration* 1.133). In the work on gout which goes under Lucian's name the author suggests that the sufferings of gout would be worse punishment for sins than those torments presently inflicted on Tantalus, Sisyphus, and Ixion (*Podagra* 9-13).¹³⁷ An anonymous wag coined this bit of black humor:

Below in Hell are judgment and Tantalus. I do not disbelieve it,
training for the infernal torments by my poverty.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ See, for example, Seneca *Naturales Quaestiones* 3.28.7-9.

¹³⁶ *De Beneficiis* 4.1.3. Translation by John W. Basore in LCL, vol. 3 of Seneca (1935), 207.

¹³⁷ Ixion tied to a whirling wheel is one of several later additions to the Homeric trio of sufferers. See Apollodorus *Library*, Epitome 1.20; Virgil *Georgics* 3.37-39. Sometimes mentioned are Theseus and Pirithous enchained and the Danaids carrying water in a leaky vessel. See Cumont, *After Life*, 85 and 171.

¹³⁸ *Greek Anthology* 10.114. Translation by W. R. Paton in LCL, vol. 4 (1971), 59.

A similar joke has a woman who loved to be in her cups pray to be condemned by Minos, so that she could be assigned to the company of the eternally water-bearing Danaids and thus keep close to a jar (*Greek Anthology* 7.384).

Among more general references to judgment the anonymous poem *Aetna* ingeniously sets the stage for a more scientific portrayal of the volcanic activity of Mount Etna by detailing the deluded poetic images of underworld judgment (lines 74-84). Martial roasts a hack poet by praying that his punishment for the wounds he inflicted by his verses be continued even after death:

. . . may he weary out all the fabled torments of the poets; and when the Fury shall bid him confess the truth, may he shriek, his conscience betraying him: "I wrote it."¹³⁹

Plautus has a character denigrate a farm by saying that it would be a fit place for afterlife punishments (*Trinummus*, lines 547-52). Lucian derides those who deliver competitive funeral orations "as if they were pleading or testifying on behalf of the dead man before the judges down below!"¹⁴⁰

Horace can use the image of an afterlife judgment as a poetic way to refer to death (*Odes* 2.13.21-24; 4.7.21-24). Propertius swears that he will not forget a kindness, rhetorically calling down on himself the judgment of the Furies and Aeacus and the torments of Tityus and Sisyphus (*Elegies* 2.20.29-32). Seneca makes ample use of the mythological lore of judgment in his tragedies. In *Hercules Oetaeus* the bitter guilty conscience of Deianira for her role in the death of Heracles is expressed by her unholy prayer to be subjected to all the fabled punishments of Hades.¹⁴¹ In *Thyestes* the ghost of Tantalus foreshadows the tragedies of his descendants by prophesying that their misdeeds will keep Minos busy.¹⁴²

In all these references to judgment the storehouse of Greek mythology is being raided for the sake of poetic effect and a display of literary artistry. Yet we should not therefore dismiss such references as unimportant. Precisely the easy familiarity of the poets with these images

¹³⁹ *Epigrams* 10.5. Translation by Walter C. A. Ker in LCL, vol. 2 (1968), 157.

¹⁴⁰ Lucian *On Funerals* 23. Translation by A. M. Harmon in LCL, vol. 4 (1925), 129.

¹⁴¹ Lines 934-57; 1007-1011. See also lines 1061-1089.

¹⁴² Lines 1-23. See also *Agamemnon*, lines 23-24.

indicates the availability of postmortem judgment language to the Greco-Roman literati and their patrons and audiences.

Consolation

Some think death to be an evil merely because it deprives them of the good things of life, others because there are eternal torments and horrible punishments beneath the earth.¹⁴³

If Plutarch is correct that some people feared death because of the dread of postmortem judgment, then it is not surprising that the question of judgment should be dealt with when death became an issue. We can see this in philosophical discussions about death, funeral speeches, laments, consolatory addresses, and epitaphs.

In the case of Epicurean philosophy the fear of death was to be disarmed by a denial of any form of postmortem judgment (Lucretius *De Rerum Natura* 3.978-1023). For this reason Diogenes of Oenoanda can laugh death to scorn.¹⁴⁴ A less drastic version of this sort of argument denies the prospect of postmortem judgment yet affirms the immortality of the soul. This is the argument of Cicero in Book 1 of the *Tusculan Disputations*. In the dialogue over the question whether death is an evil, both speakers agree that the tales of the underworld judgments are ignorant inventions of poets and painters (1.9-11).¹⁴⁵ Therefore, death is not an evil (1.112), and we can die joyfully, knowing that death brings either freedom from all sensation or an immortal life for the soul (1.118).¹⁴⁶ Ovid in *Metamorphoses* 15.153-75 chides people for fearing death and the fabled underworld when in fact souls are immortal and continually enter new bodies. In all these arguments it is the denial of judgment that removes the fear of death. Where immortality is affirmed, it is an immortality of the soul which is not disturbed by any hint of judgment.

There is, however, one significant hellenistic philosophical discus-

¹⁴³ Plutarch *De Virtute Morali* 450A. Translation by W. C. Helmbold in LCL, vol. 6 (1939), 71.

¹⁴⁴ Frag. 14; from around 200 C.E. See also (Plutarch) *De Superstitione* 166F-167A, in which the superstitious person is seen to be subject to fears of postmortem judges and torturers in Hades.

¹⁴⁵ Seneca (*Epistulae Morales* 117.6) also contrasts belief in the immortality of the soul with the general human fear of the underworld.

¹⁴⁶ A similar rationale for not fearing death is given by Cicero *De Senectute* 77-85, and Seneca *Epistulae Morales* 24.18.

sion of death which seeks both to remove the fear of death and to affirm a belief in postmortem judgment. This is the work which has come down under the name of Plato but is universally recognized to have been written in the second or first century B.C.E., the *Axiochus*¹⁴⁷. Socrates is asked to come and console the old man Axiochus, who is at the point of death (364B-C) and expresses his fear of dying (365C). Socrates responds by reminding him that death is a good because the soul is immortal (365E-366B) and because death is a release from all the unpleasantness of life (370C-D). These arguments convince Axiochus, but Socrates is not yet finished. He goes on to repeat a story heard from Gobryas, a Persian wiseman (371A-372). In this myth there is not an undifferentiated immortality of the soul but a judgment. Minos and Rhadamanthus sit in the Plain of Truth:

There sit the judges interrogating each of those who arrive, concerning what kind of life he has lived and amid what pursuits while he dwelled in his body. It is impossible to lie. So, then, all whom a good daimon inspired in life go to reside in a place of the pious. . . . There is a certain place of honor for those who are initiated, and there they celebrate their holy rites. . . . Those, however, who have spent their life in crime are led by the Furies to Erebus and Chaos through Tartarus, where there is a region of the impious, the ceaseless fetching of water by the Danaids, the thirst of Tantalus, the entrails of Tityus eternally devoured and regenerated, the never-resting stone of Sisyphus, whose end of toil is again the beginning. There are those who are being licked clean by wild beasts, set persistently on fire by the torches of the Avengers, and who, tortured with every kind of torture, are consumed by everlasting punishments.¹⁴⁸

This story serves to add another dimension to the consolation, a moral qualification. In spite of the threat of judgment, consolation in the face of death is still the main purpose of the dialogue, as is shown by these concluding words of Socrates:

These things I heard from Gobyras; but you must decide for yourself, Axiochus. For I, drawn by reason, know only this for a certainty: that every soul is immortal, and that when removed from this place, it is also free from pain. Consequently, either below or above, you must be happy, Axiochus, if you have lived piously.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Jackson P. Hershbell, *Pseudo-Plato, Axiochus* (SBLTT 21; Graeco-Roman Religion Series 6; Scholars Press, 1981), 1, 10, 20-21.

¹⁴⁸ 371C-372. Translation by Hershbell, *Axiochus*, 47-49.

¹⁴⁹ 372. Translation by Hershbell, *Axiochus*, 49.

The last qualifying phrase, "if you have lived piously," indicates that the author wants to maintain the moral value of a postmortem judgment even while affirming that death is an unqualified good which should be embraced eagerly.

Judgment language also plays some role in those writings addressed to survivors after the death of a particular person or group—funeral orations, laments, and consolations. Each of these types of composition has consolation as at least part of its purpose. We have already seen that the classical Athenian funeral speech for those slain in battle sometimes included a reference to a blessed lot in the afterlife won by the bravery of the soldiers.¹⁵⁰ These brief references served both to console the survivors and to add another dimension to the eulogy of the dead. This is true also of the two extant funeral orations by Aelius Aristides (*Orationes* 31 and 32), in which the brief vague references to an afterlife serve to underscore the orator's praise for the deceased (31.15 and 32.34). Later rhetoricians who discuss such speeches (the ἐπιτάφιος) say that one should mention confidence in immortality as part of the consoling aspect of the speech. The *Ars Rhetorica* under the name of Dionysius of Halicarnassus says that one should affirm that the souls of such people as the deceased are immortal and have a better life among the gods.¹⁵¹ Menander Rhetor suggests that one should express confidence that the deceased is in the Elysian Plain or has his πολίτευμα with the gods.¹⁵² However, except insofar as the deceased is assumed to have earned such a blessed immortality by his virtuous life, there is no judgment mentioned as the qualifying test for these rewards. The negative possibility is ignored.

Judgment language is also used in extant examples of consolatory addresses and of the type of poem in honor of the dead known in Latin literature as an *Epicedium*.¹⁵³ Plutarch comforts his wife over the death of their daughter with the hope instilled by the Dionysiac rites and by the knowledge that the soul is immortal and will depart to a better and more divine place (*Consolatio ad Uxorem* 611D-612A). Similar promises of a happy afterlife are made in the Latin *Consolatio ad Liviam* (falsely attributed to Ovid) 209-216, where it is said that the deceased

¹⁵⁰ The speeches of Hyperides and the one attributed to Demosthenes. The other extant classical funeral speeches make no mention of an afterlife.

¹⁵¹ H. Usener and L. Radermacher, *Dionysius Halicarnaseus*, vol. 6, part 2 (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1965), 283, lines 8-10.

¹⁵² 421, lines 16-17; in D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson (eds.), *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 176-77. See the comments of Herbert Martin, Jr. and Jane E. Phillips in *Plutarch's Ethical Writings and Early Christian Literature* (ed. H. D. Betz; SCHNT 4; Leiden: Brill, 1978), 408-10.

¹⁵³ See "Epicedium," *OCD*, 389.

is to be welcomed in the hall of Jupiter; in Ovid (*Amores* 3.9.59-66), where the destination is to be among the blest in the vale of Elysium;¹⁵⁴ and in Martial (*Epigrams* 7.40), where the goal is also Elysium.¹⁵⁵ All of these illustrate the instruction given later by Menander Rhetor that a consolatory address (παράμυθητικόν) should speak with confidence that the deceased is dwelling in the Elysian Plain with Rhadamanthus, Menelaus, and other divinized heroes, or with the gods, or in the aether.¹⁵⁶ Once again, there is no thought of a full judgment in these texts, since only the positive destiny is mentioned.

Some consolatory texts go a step further to state confidently that, because of his or her acknowledged virtue, the deceased has passed through judgment and is among the blest. The most striking instance is in Propertius *Elegies* 4.11. The first century B.C.E. Latin poet has the deceased speak in the first person and declare his innocence:

. . . guiltless, though untimely, am I come hither, and may Father Dis deal gentle judgment to my soul. Else, if there be an Aeacus who sits in judgment with the urn at his side, let him punish my shade when the lot bearing my name is drawn. Let the two brothers sit by him, and near the seat of Minos let the stern band of Furies stand, while all the court is hushed to hear my doom. Sisyphus, be thou freed awhile from thy huge stone! Hushed be Ixion's wheel! And thou, baffling water, be thou caught by the lips of Tantalus! . . . Myself I plead my cause. If I plead falsely, let the woeful urn that is the Danaid sisters' doom bow down my shoulders.¹⁵⁷

The poet anticipates that his virtue and merit will win him the reward of a kind sentence—to dwell with his glorious ancestors (lines 99-102). Statius (*Silvae* 3.3.16 and 23) says that, though people who have done wrong should indeed fear the judgment of Aeacus, this person who has died will dwell in Elysium.¹⁵⁸ Finally, in the *Consolatio ad Apollonium* which has come down under the name of Plutarch we read:

And if the account of the ancient poets and philosophers is true, as it most likely is, and so there is for those of the departed who have been righteous a certain honour and preferment, as is said, and a place set apart in which their souls pass their existence, then you ought to be of good hope for your dear departed son that he will be reckoned among their number and will be with them.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁴ "Pios" seems not to refer so much to the qualifications needed but to the state of happiness enjoyed in Elysium.

¹⁵⁵ See also Statius *Silvae* 2.1.203-204; 2.6.98-100.

¹⁵⁶ 414, lines 16-20. Russell and Wilson, Menander Rhetor, 162-63.

¹⁵⁷ 4.11.17-28. Translation by H. E. Butler in LCL (1912), 333.

¹⁵⁸ Similar in 5.1.192-93 and 247-61; 5.3.277-87. See also Tacitus *Agricola* 46.1.

¹⁵⁹ 120B. Translation by F. C. Babbitt in LCL, vol. 2 (1928), 203.

This confidence is supported with quotations from Pindar and Plato's Gorgias concerning judgment and the state of the righteous in the other world. The widespread use of this sort of confident judgment language in consolation literature gives us good reason to suppose that such themes really did serve their intended function for people in grief—to instill confidence not only in an existence after death but also in the happy nature of the existence for the person who has died.

Similar language is employed frequently for the purpose of consolation in a final class of texts—epitaphs.¹⁶⁰ Often the postmortem destination is specified as the country or abode or rooms of the godly (εὐσεβέων);¹⁶¹ or the country or islands of the blessed (μακάρων) and similar expressions;¹⁶² or Elysium;¹⁶³ or to be among the heroes.¹⁶⁴ A first century C.E. epitaph from Lydia speaks of an old woman who after death reached the country of the blessed and after judgment dwells on a throne with the godly (κεκριμένα νάει σύνθρονος εὐσεβέσιν).¹⁶⁵ In a first or second century C.E. epitaph from Smyrna the deceased claims to have honor and fame (τιμή and κλέος) among the immortal gods and to be seated at their table.¹⁶⁶ None of the epitaphs mentioned give any basis for these happy destinies, although the use of εὐσεβής in some of them might imply that their fate is different from that of the ungodly. A number of these epitaphs are in the form of prayers addressed to Aeacus, Minos, Apollo, Hades, Hermes, or Maia (the mother of Hermes). For example, these lines from an epitaph at Samos in the late second century B.C.E.:

¹⁶⁰ Included here are mostly Greek verse epitaphs from the third century B.C.E. to the third century C.E. I have not dealt much with the Latin inscriptions, which are in any case mostly later than the period of our interest and dependent on Greek images. See Judson Allen Tolman, Jr., *A Study of the Sepulchral Inscriptions in Buecheler's "Carmina Epigraphica Latina"* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910), 92-93 and 97-120; Latimore, *Epitaphs*, 40-42, 54-55, 59-65.

¹⁶¹ Peek, *GVI*, #258; #531; #665; #677; #805; #1017; #1128 (*GG*, #144); #1139; #1154 (*GG*, #166); #1155 (*GG*, #167); #1297, in which the abode of the godly is contrasted with Tartarus; #1349; #1360 (*Greek Anthology* 7.260); #1423; #1594 (*GG*, #350); #1719; #1729 (*GG*, #207); #1771; #1871 (*GG*, #432); #1918 (*GG*, #445); #1967; #1990; #2018 (*GG*, #470); #2023; see also *Greek Anthology* 7.520. Dwelling among the godly is also mentioned in *GVI*, #431; #642; #699; #760.

¹⁶² Peek, *GVI*, #642; #973; #1090 (*GG*, #306); #1547 (*GG*, #345); #1562; #1574; #1581; #1763 (*GG*, #353); #1765 (*GG*, #391); #1776; #1830 (*GG*, #399); #1990; #2040.

¹⁶³ Peek, *GVI*, #431; #1090 (*GG*, #306); #1830 (*GG*, #399); #1924; #1990.

¹⁶⁴ Peek, *GVI*, #677; #1477; #1574. On all these as synonymous expressions see Latimore, *Epitaphs*, 52.

¹⁶⁵ Peek, *GVI*, #642. See the discussion of this text, with somewhat different readings, in Werner Peek, *Griechische Versinschriften aus Kleinasien* (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 143; Vienna, 1980), 11. A similar epitaph from second century B.C.E. Egypt has the deceased seated on a throne with Minos among the godly (Peek, *GVI*, #699). See also #805.

¹⁶⁶ Peek, *GVI*, #1765 (*GG*, #391).

Μίνως, ἐν θνατοῖσι δικαστύας ἔξοχα κρείνων, τὸν νέον εὖσε-
βέων χώρῳ ἐναργλάσων. Minos, as you decide an excellent judg-
ment among the dead, give distinction to the youth in the country of
the godly.¹⁶⁷

Such prayers suggest that a judgment with a negative outcome is a considered possibility. It need hardly be noted that the negative possibility is rarely, if ever, mentioned explicitly on an epitaph.

What is hinted at indirectly in the above epitaphs is stated more clearly in a number of others—a positive judgment is expected on the basis of the moral life of the deceased. A number of epitaphs make clear that it is a life of godliness which qualifies one for the postmortem country of the godly, as in this third or second century B.C.E. epitaph from the city of Demetrias in Magnesia:

εἰ κέκρικας χρηστήν, Ῥαδάμανθου, γυναιῖκα καὶ ἄλλην, ἣ Μίνως,
καὶ τήνδε οὖσαν Ἀριστομάχου κόρυρν εἰς μακάρων νήσους ἄγεται·
εὖσεβίαν γὰρ ἤσκει καὶ συνέδρον τῆσδε δικαιοσύνην. If your
judgment has ever considered another woman virtuous, Rhadaman-
thus, or you Minos, so also lead this daughter of Aristomachos to the
Islands of the Blest. For she practised godliness and its companion,
righteousness.¹⁶⁸

This prayer for a good judgment seems to serve two related functions. First, the survivors are consoled by the confidence that the dead woman is among the blest. Second, the mention of her godliness is an act of praise, a eulogy of the woman to those who pass by the grave. Such a double purpose can be seen in many references to a moral judgment in these verse inscriptions. An epitaph from the island of Rheneae in the first century C.E. explicitly notes a postmortem judgment:

εἰ δέ τις ἔν' φθιμένοις κρίσις, ὥς ἰ λόγος ἀ<μ>φὶ θανόντων, ἰ
Σώγηνες, οἰκήσεις εἰς δ[ό]μον εὖσεβέων. Sogenes, if there is any
discrimination among the dead, as they say there is, you will dwell
in the abode of the pious.¹⁶⁹

The "two ways" of judgment are alluded to in this third century B.C.E. poem:

¹⁶⁷ Peek, *GVI*, #1154 (*GG*, #16). My translation. Other prayers are in *GVI*, #258; #677; #1179 (*GG*, #216); #1871 (*GG*, #432); #1918 (*GG*, #445).

¹⁶⁸ Peek, *GVI*, #1693 (*GG*, #209). My translation. Other epitaphs in which εὖσεβεια is the basis for a positive judgment are in Peek, *GVI*, #1484 (*GG*, #339); #1694 (*GG*, #210); #764 (*GG*, #134).

¹⁶⁹ Peek, *GVI*, #1474 (*GG*, #330). Translation by Lattimore, *Epitaphs*, 56. See also *Greek Anthology* 7.596, where a man says that he and his wife are pronounced not guilty at the bench of Minos.

They say that Hermes leads the just from the pyre to Rhadamanthus by the right-hand path, the path by which Aristonous, the not unwept son of Chaerestratus, descended to the house of Hades, the gatherer of peoples.¹⁷⁰

Another third century B.C.E. epitaph, from Thessaly, prays that Persephone establish the deceased in the meadow of the godly because of his pure and righteous soul.¹⁷¹

The double function of consolation and eulogy comes out most clearly in a number of epitaphs which speak of positive postmortem judgment in terms of praise, honor, and status. Here is a striking epitaph from third century B.C.E. Athens:

οἶδα δὲ σοὶ ὅτι καὶ κατὰ γῆς, εἴπερ χρηστοῖς γέρας ἐστίν, πρότει
σοὶ τιμίαι, τίτθῃ, παρὰ Φερσεφόνοι Πλούτωνί τε κείνται. Nurse,
I know that the highest honors are in store for you even below the
earth with Pluto and Persephone, at least, if the honest ones have
their reward.¹⁷²

Two epitaphs from Corinth itself illustrate this point well:

[τ]ῶν ἔνεκ' εὐσεβέων με καθ' ἱερὸν ἄγαγε χώρον Ἑρμῆς· αἰνεῖσθω
καὶ ὡς χθονὶ σωφροσύνα. Therefore Hermes led me to the sacred
place of the pious ones. Let good character be honored even under the
earth.¹⁷³

εἰδ' ἀγαθαῖς τιμά τ[ις] ὑπὸ χ[θον]ός, ἅδε
τέτευχεν

¹⁷⁰ Peek, *GVI*, #1642 (*Greek Anthology* 7.545). Translation by W. R. Paton in *LCL, Greek Anthology*, vol. 2 (1917), 293. The word ἀγαθός as a qualification is found also in Peek, *GVI*, #908 (*GG*, #255).

¹⁷¹ Peek, *GVI*, #1572 (*GG*, #208). Other qualifications as the basis for a positive judgment are χρηστός (*GVI*, #747; #881); σοφία (*GVI*, #1971; #970); σωφροσύνη (*GVI*, #1294; #1970 [*GG*, #462]; #1764 [*GG*, #354]; #1289 [*GG*, #322]; #1162 [*GG*, #316]); to live καλῶς (*GVI*, #1940); ἀρετή (*GVI*, #1932; #1289 [*GG*, #322]; #1249; #48 [*GG*, #22]; #1943); to be ἐσθλός (*GVI*, #1289 [*GG*, #322]); to have been dear to all (ποθεινότατος) both while living and after death (*GVI*, #1869; see also #1002); to be πανάριστος and have highest κύδος (*GVI*, #1772 [*GG*, #355]); the charm of a girl's face (*GVI*, #1595 [*GG*, #351]); to honor one's parents (*GVI*, #1002); to be δγνός (*GVI*, #842 [*GG*, #154]); to be beloved to mortals and immortals (*GVI*, #752); to treat people with "decency, wisdom, righteousness, and respect" (*GVI*, #2061 [*GG*, #393]; this is from Rome in the third or fourth century C.E.). See also the prayer that Aeacus and Minos find no fault (μῶμος) with a good wife (*GG*, #194).

¹⁷² Peek, *GVI*, #747. Translation by Lattimore, *Epitaphs*, 58. For the use of γέρας to speak of a postmortem reward see also *GVI*, #881 and #1764 (*GG*, #354).

¹⁷³ Peek, *GVI*, #1294 (*GG*, #321). Translation by Lattimore, *Epitaphs*, 51. This is from the second century C.E. Published in Benjamin Dean Meritt, *Corinth: Results of Excavations*, vol. 8, part 1: *Greek Inscriptions 1896-1927* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), #130, pp. 88-89.

πρώτας εὐκόλποι καὶ παρὰ [Π]ερσεφόνοι.

If there is any honor beneath the earth for good women, she has now attained first honor in the presence of fair-bosomed Persephone.¹⁷⁴

A second century C.E. epitaph from Illyria begins by proclaiming that the deceased has reached Elysium because of his virtue, and it concludes:

Ἄπτυρι, κλεινὸν ἄγαλμα, καὶ ἐν φθιμένοισι ! φανείης ὥσπερ ἐνὶ
ζωαῖς κῦδος ὀπασσαμένη. Attyris, my glory and delight, may you
be known to attain honor even among the dead, as you did among the
living.¹⁷⁵

Many of these epitaphs suggest that honor in the afterlife both continues and is based upon one's reputation and honor while alive.

Such a conception of postmortem judgment is an extension of the practice in which an individual or city proclaims praise or honor to someone, praise that would continue to be remembered after his death. This is illustrated by this third century B.C.E. epitaph from Euboea:

μνῆμα δὲ σῆς ἀρετῆς
στ[ῆσε] πατὴρ Θε[οκλῆς, ἀειμνήστοισι] δὲ ἐπαίνους κόσμησε
ἦδε πόλις καὶ κατὰ γῆς φθίμενον. Your father Theocles set up a
monument for your virtue, and your city glorified you with praise
ever memorable even after you died and passed beneath the earth.¹⁷⁶

To be crowned at the grave meant that the city had made the deceased a hero, to live in immortality.¹⁷⁷ This practice suggests a close connection between eulogy and the winning of a happy fate in the afterlife. The praise expressed on the gravestone was intended to console the survivors by calling attention to the dead person's reputation in life and also by instilling confidence that the person's reputation for virtue would win similar praise and honors after judgment. Even if we allow for the prevalence of certain cliches and classical poetic allusions in these epi-

¹⁷⁴ Text and translation in John Harvey Kent, *Corinth: Results of Excavations*, vol. 8, part 3: *The Inscriptions 1926-1950* (Princeton, N.J.: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1966), #300, pp. 117-18.

¹⁷⁵ Peek, *GVI*, #1943. Translation by Lattimore, *Epitaphs*, 57. For κῦδος as the qualification for a positive post-mortem destiny see Peek, *GVI*, #1772 (*GG*, #355).

¹⁷⁶ Peek, *GVI*, #1504. Translation by Lattimore, *Epitaphs*, 224.

¹⁷⁷ Peek, *GG*, #206, and comments on p. 307; *GVI*, #48 (*GG*, #22). See also *GVI*, #1162 (*GG*, #316), where the deceased dwells on a throne together with the heroes. On the whole question see Lewis Richard Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1921); Werner Jaeger, "The Greek Ideas of Immortality," *HTR* 52 (1959), 138.

taphs,¹⁷⁸ such uses of judgment language really seem to have served a consolatory function for many people.

In conclusion it is clear that in Greco-Roman culture it was not only the philosophical denial of postmortem judgment that served to console mourners or to take away the fear of death. Judgment language could actually play a positive role in such consolation. Yet the sort of judgment language that we find in consolatory texts is most often rather one-sided and devitalized. Rarely is the negative possibility mentioned; where punishment is mentioned or implied as a possibility it is only to serve as a contrast to the happy fate won by the life of virtue. Finally, we noted the close relationship in many consolatory texts between consolation and eulogy—a relationship which in many cases is created by the use of judgment terms. To proclaim that the deceased is qualified by his or her life to win a favorable postmortem judgment is itself an act of praise.

Judgment and Ritual Propaganda

It was pointed out above that in classical Greece the Eleusinian and related Dionysiac mystery rites became popular in part because of the promise of a better afterlife for initiates. A number of hellenistic and Roman references indicate that such claims continued to be made. In the *Axiochus* in the midst of a more general exposition of postmortem judgment on a moral basis comes the assurance that the initiated will be granted a place of honor (προεδρίᾳ). They will continue to celebrate their holy rites in the afterlife (371D).¹⁷⁹ Aelius Aristides says of the Eleusinian mysteries:

But the gain from the festival lay not only in the present joy and the release and liberation from the troubles of the past, but also in men having fairer hopes about death, that they will have a better existence and will not be in the darkness and mud which await the uninitiated.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Facts which for Lattimore (*Epitaphs*, 55-56), Cumont (*After Life*, 84), and Tolman (*Sepulchral Inscriptions*, 101) make the seriousness of "belief" behind these epitaphs doubtful or at least difficult to determine. Rohde (*Psyche*, 543) calls attention to the "dubious" *if* which precedes many statements.

¹⁷⁹ See also an epitaph from Rhodes in the second century B.C.E., in which it is said that a man, in reward for faithfulness, will be appointed to supervise the mysteries in his afterlife. *IG* 12.1, 141; translation in Lattimore, *Epitaphs*, 51.

¹⁸⁰ *Oration* 22.10. Translation by Charles A. Behr, *P. Aelius Aristides: The Complete Works*, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 25. See also *Oration* 1.341; Cicero *Laws* 2.36.

We see here that the priests of the mysteries both made promises to the initiates and threatened non-initiates with punishments. Origen says that Celsus compared Christian threats of hell to the threats of the priests of the mysteries. Origen himself doubts that pagans have been very much influenced by these teachings of the mysteries (*Contra Celsum* 8.48). In spite of Origen's comment, however, it seems that the mysteries did have at least some influence.

Plutarch is one who indicates that he has been influenced by this aspect of the mysteries. He takes comfort at the death of his daughter from the knowledge imparted by the Dionysiac rites about the imperishable soul (*Consolatio ad Uxorem* 611D). What such mystic knowledge was we can gather from a remarkable fragment probably from Plutarch's work "On the Soul" (fragment 178). He compares the experience of the soul at death to the experience of initiation. Not only is there a vision of a blessed meadow, music, freedom, and continuing sacred rites, but the soul also sees the mob of the uninitiated on earth, trampling one another in darkness and mud, fearful of death, since they do not believe in the joys of the other world. Plutarch blends present mystic experience and future hopes for the soul together in such a way that one who undergoes such initiation could not doubt the happy life to come after death.¹⁸¹

Judgment and the Control of Society

We saw earlier how Critias had claimed that divine rewards and punishments were invented to keep people from secret crimes and thus to keep them from a beastly life of anarchy. Sextus Empiricus, who preserved the Critias fragment, states his agreement.¹⁸² We also saw that Plato suggested that even falsehoods and less-than-certain myths have value if they lead people to a right way of living. Among the sophisticated elite there existed an idea that uneducated people needed the carrot and stick approach to keep them in line, whereas the educated seek virtue for its own sake and for the honor that it brings, an idea

¹⁸¹ In *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* 1150A-B Plutarch says that those who fear the underworld can find a remedy in rituals of purification that promise play and dancing in the afterlife. In *De audiendis poetis* 21F he introduces a quote from Sophocles on the promises of the mysteries by saying that these lines have made many people despondent, presumably because they could not gain initiation.

¹⁸² *Against the Physicists* 1.14-16 (= *Adv. Math.* 9.14-16). Plutarch (*Adversus Colotem* 1124E-F) agrees that without God watching over human actions life would become bestial.

especially prominent in Stoicism.¹⁸³ Cicero in *De Partitione Oratoria* 26 makes these two types of motivation according to the level of the audience into a principle for moral exhortation.¹⁸⁴

Cicero himself once refers to the ancient invention of belief in postmortem punishments as a means to confront evildoers with fear (*In Catilinam* 4.8). Diodorus Siculus states a similar view in this way, although he speaks of present retribution, not postmortem judgment:

. . . surely it is to the interest of society that the fear of the gods should be deeply embedded in the hearts of the people. For those who act honestly because they are themselves virtuous are but few, and the great mass of humanity abstain from evil-doing only because of the penalties of the law and the retribution that comes from the gods.¹⁸⁵

In another place Diodorus claims that the myths about Hades, in spite of their fictitiousness, contribute greatly to fostering human piety and justice (1.2.2). Polybius applies this idea in a rather bold way in his *Histories* 6.56.6-15. He states that the Roman state is held together by superstition, since states are composed not only of wise people but also of the fickle multitude. The lawless desires of the multitude must be held in check by terrors, including beliefs in the punishments of Hades. Many people foolishly reject such beliefs, and for this reason Greek government officials cannot be trusted, whereas Romans, whose state is still held together by such fears, can be trusted.¹⁸⁶

It is here that we need to consider a text from a work which comes to us under the name of Timaeus of Locri (the chief speaker in Plato's *Timaeus*), but which most likely comes from the first century B.C.E. or somewhat later. *De Natura Mundi et Animae* is essentially an epitome of Plato's *Timaeus*, probably originating in Neopythagorean or Middle Platonic circles.¹⁸⁷ The relevant text reads:

But if anyone is stubborn and disobedient, let punishment according to both the laws and the traditional stories come upon him, punish-

¹⁸³ Norden, *Aeneis Buch VI*, 3.

¹⁸⁴ Propertius (4.11.45-50) boasts that he followed the laws by nature rather than from fear of judgment. (Plutarch) *De liberis educandis* 12C, takes a broader view and includes both hope of reward and fear of punishment as elements of virtue.

¹⁸⁵ 34/35.2.47. Translation by F. R. Walton in LCL, vol. 12 (1967), 89.

¹⁸⁶ On the fear of postmortem judgment as a useful motivation for societal justice see also Aelius Aristides (*Oration* 45.25-26), referring to Sarapis as judge. See also Iamblichus *De Vita Pythagorica* 30.179; Plutarch *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* 1104B-C.

¹⁸⁷ On questions of authorship and date see Baltes, *Timaios Lokros*, 1-3, 10-11, 20-26; Thomas H. Tobin, *Timaios of Locri, On the Nature of the World and the Soul* (SBLTT 26; Chico: Scholars, 1984), 3-7.

ment that brings with it intense terrors both under the heavens and in Hades, where inexorable punishments are reserved for the unlucky dead, as well as those other terrors for which I praise the Ionian poet who struck the cursed with fear. For, just as we sometimes restore bodies to health by means of sicknesses, if someone does not follow really healthy ways of life, so too we restrain souls with false stories, if someone will not be guided by true ones. Unusual punishments must surely be noted, in that the souls of the cowardly are clothed in female bodies which are given over to lust; the souls of murderers are clothed in the bodies of beasts for punishment; those of the debauchers are clothed in the shapes of asses and boars; those of the light-headed and thoughtless are clothed in the bodies of birds that ply the air; and those of the idle and indolent, as well as those of the ignorant and foolish, are clothed in the shape of water creatures. Nemesis, together with the avenging and chthonic daimons, the overseers of human affairs, have determined all of these things for the second cycle (of birth).¹⁸⁸

The two major traditions of postmortem judgment are here set side-by-side: the Homeric version of underworld punishments and the Pythagorean-Platonic teaching of metempsychosis determined by one's moral life. The author clearly regards the Homeric conceptions as "false stories," fictions which nevertheless can be of use to the stubborn and disobedient, just as normally unhealthful things are sometimes used to promote healing.¹⁸⁹ This suggests that Homer was commonly used at this time in moral instruction.¹⁹⁰ How the author regards metempsychosis, however, is somewhat unclear, because the connection between the two traditions in the phrase λέγουντο δ' ἀναγκαίως καὶ at the beginning of paragraph 86 is open to two interpretations. At first glance the καὶ might indicate that what follows are regarded as further "false stories," so that metempsychosis, too, is seen as a potentially useful fiction.¹⁹¹ The way in which metempsychosis is presented in paragraph 86 and especially in 87, however, leads one to think that the author regards metempsychosis as the truth, contrasted with the "fiction" of the Homeric view.¹⁹² In any case, our author sees the fear of postmortem punishment as useful to restrain immorality.

¹⁸⁸ 104C-105A (paragraphs 84-87). Translation and Greek text in Tobin, *Timaos of Locri, On the Nature of the World and the Soul*, 70-73. See the commentary of Baltes, *Timaos Lokros*, 240-52.

¹⁸⁹ In this idea the author reflects the views of Plato. See Baltes, *Timaos Lokros*, 240-43.

¹⁹⁰ Baltes, *Timaos Lokros*, 242.

¹⁹¹ Baltes, *Timaos Lokros*, 243-44, note 1; he lists the scholars who have followed this line.

¹⁹² This is the view of Baltes, *Timaos Lokros*, 243-45; also of Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 49-51.

Postmortem Judgment in Moral Exhortation

The texts discussed in the previous section all presuppose that the most obvious use of judgment language is in moral exhortation, even if such motivation is considered by some to be beneath their dignity. We have also seen that the pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus* incorporates a story of underworld judgment within its philosophical discussion of death, in order to introduce a moral note into the discussion (371A-372).¹⁹³

If we were to judge by his philosophical writings, we would suppose that postmortem judgment could play no role for Seneca. Yet we have already seen that he could make use of underworld mythology in his tragedies, and in one of them, *Hercules Furens*, he gives us a straightforward and extended description of the underworld, complete with a moralistic postmortem judgment. A passing reference to the judges below who "investigate men's crimes and sift out ancient wrongs" (lines 579-81)¹⁹⁴ prepares us for the fuller description given later. Hercules has just returned triumphant from Hades leading the subdued Cerberus. Amphitryon asks Theseus, who had accompanied Hercules:

Is the report true that in the underworld justice, though tardy, is meted out, and that guilty souls who have forgot their crimes suffer due punishment?¹⁹⁵

Theseus responds in lines 731-47 by telling him of the three inquisitors Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Aeacus, who hand out sentences according to the particular crimes. One moral issue is specifically mentioned: the conduct of rulers. Bloody rulers are imprisoned and insolent tyrants are torn by plebeian hands, while guiltless and mild rulers reach Elysium. Seneca concludes this section with the warning:

Abstain from human blood, all ye who rule: with heavier punishment your sins are judged.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ See also brief references to a separation (διακρίνειν) of the good from the wicked by the judges Rhadamanthus and Minos in Diodorus Siculus 5.79.2. Horace (*Epode* 16.39-64) speaks of the Islands of the Blest being set aside by Jupiter only for righteous people. The poem *Culex* which went under the name of Virgil gives a rather full description of the underworld and its punishments in lines 206-384; the thrust is that the judgment divides the righteous from the wicked (lines 372-78). On the *Culex* see Cyril Bailey, *Religion in Virgil* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1935), 266.

¹⁹⁴ Translation by Frank Justus Miller in LCL, vol. 8 of Seneca (1917), 55.

¹⁹⁵ Lines 727-30. Translation by Frank Justus Miller in LCL, vol. 8 of Seneca (1917), 67.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 67.

Then follows a full list of the traditional sufferers and their punishments (lines 747-59). It is not hard to imagine that Seneca had his own political environment in mind when he wrote these words of warning, and he must have assumed that such a use of judgment traditions would at least make sense to others of his circle.

At the end of the first century C.E. another Latin poet made use of underworld judgment traditions in moral exhortation, Statius in his epic *Thebais*. He describes Minos as the one who

. . . shakes them in his inexorable urn, demanding the truth with threats, and constrains them to speak out their whole lives' story and at last confess their extorted gains.¹⁹⁷

Then the traditional sufferers are named. Statius again later stresses the revealing of the truth of each individual's life by the underworld judges (8.21-30, 101-102). Like Seneca, Statius also makes a point of specifying the postmortem judgment of kings (11.571-72).

Both Seneca and Statius, and indeed almost all who used underworld judgment motifs in the first century C.E. and later, probably owed a great deal to that most famous underworld journey of all—that of Aeneas in Virgil's *Aeneid*, Book 6. Virgil's account is remarkable not only for its poetic power but also because it combines in a unique manner the two major judgment traditions—the underworld judgment and the transmigration of souls.¹⁹⁸ Virgil is clearly following the model of the underworld journey of Odysseus in Homer, but whereas Homer only gives brief hints about a postmortem judgment, Virgil makes judgment into a major theme of the journey.¹⁹⁹

Aeneas is not long in Hades before he sees an act of judgment, when he comes to those condemned during their life on false charges. These are assigned places in Hades by a court presided over by Minos, who "learns men's lives and misdeeds" (lines 431-33).²⁰⁰ This is a judgment of a rather limited scope, but later in the journey Aeneas comes to the place where the road parts into two ways, to Elysium on the right and to Tartarus on the left (lines 540-43). In Tartarus Rhadamanthus is in charge, hearing confessions and assigning punishments. There are the

¹⁹⁷ 4.530-32. Translation by J. H. Mozley in LCL, vol. 1 (1928), 547.

¹⁹⁸ Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 92. On this book of Virgil see Bailey, *Religion in Virgil*, 241-301; Norden, *Aeneis Buch VI*; Dieterich, *Nekyia*, 150-58; Brooks Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), 280-305.

¹⁹⁹ Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 2, 550-51; Bailey, *Religion in Virgil*, 249.

²⁰⁰ Translation by H. Rushton Fairclough in LCL, vol. 1 (1974), 537. The Roman court of law is the model here; Bailey, *Religion in Virgil*, 254-55 and 270.

sufferers of Greek tradition, and there are also those who hated brothers, struck parents, wronged a client, were ungenerous, adulterers, traitors—all inflicted with various appropriate punishments (lines 548-627). This is the point: “Be warned; learn ye to be just and not to slight the gods!”²⁰¹

The right hand path leads to a land of happiness (lines 628-78). Here are found not only renowned heroes of old but also common people who lived well.²⁰² To this point Virgil has confronted his hero with a moralistic extension of the Homeric underworld. Aeneas is made to see the rule of justice which assigns punishment and rewards to all individuals on the basis of their deeds in life.²⁰³

There is a considerable shift of focus when Aeneas sees the souls which are about to cross the river Lethe and are waiting to enter a second body (lines 713-23). Commentators have long pointed out that this tradition of transmigration is inconsistent with the view of judgment earlier in the book. There judgment is regarded as fixed and permanent, but here souls ascend to bodies once again.²⁰⁴ Here Virgil draws on the philosophical traditions of Plato: all souls are punished for their wickedness and purged of the stain of guilt; then they are sent through Elysium, where some will stay permanently in joy while others will return again to a body (lines 724-51).²⁰⁵ Virgil’s purpose in giving us this second vision of judgment becomes clear when Anchises’ naming of the souls who will enter new bodies becomes a roll-call of future Roman heroes. The tradition of metempsychosis provides Virgil with an excuse to have Aeneas see the glorious future of Rome.²⁰⁶ Yet Virgil’s use of metempsychoses as a patriotic device does not completely eradicate his sense that this judgment, too, has a moral basis.

Virgil sets forth a positive view of postmortem judgment against the Epicurean despisers of his time.²⁰⁷ The inconsistencies between the more popular picture of the underworld and the more philosophical view of metempsychosis are minor compared to the overall unified poetic vision of a postmortem judgment that will fall on all people with justice. There is no doubt that for Virgil postmortem judgment could serve as a powerful motivation for the Roman people to do justice and not to slight the gods.

²⁰¹ Line 620. Translation by H. Rushton Fairclough in LCL, vol.1, 549.

²⁰² Bailey, *Religion in Virgil*, 272.

²⁰³ Otis, *Virgil*, 297-98; Bailey, *Religion in Virgil*, 249 and 262-63.

²⁰⁴ Bailey, *Religion in Virgil*, 273-75.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 279.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 274; Otis, *Virgil*, 299-301.

²⁰⁷ Norden, *Aeneis Buch VI*, 4.

Virgil's use of metempsychosis leads us to consider those views of judgment in which a morally based transmigration of the soul is the mechanism for reward and punishment. To be sure, metempsychosis could be seen as a purely natural non-morally determined cycle of reincarnations into the bodies of animals and people, a view which is seen, for example, in Ovid.²⁰⁸ More often metempsychosis is connected with a judgment, as we have seen above in the work attributed to Timaeus of Locri and in Virgil. Now we have to consider Cicero and Plutarch.

As we have already seen, Cicero was not a notable proponent of belief in the popular view of the underworld and judgment. In his *De Re Publica*, however, Cicero follows his Platonic prototype in including a myth of the judgment of the soul.²⁰⁹ This is the famous "Dream of Scipio," a portion of the mostly lost Book 6 of the *De Re Publica* preserved separately by Macrobius and which circulated widely as a separate work in the Middle Ages. Another fragment of the *De Re Publica* is to be placed just before the "Dream of Scipio" and serves as an introduction to it:

. . . but though the consciousness of the worth of his deeds is the noblest reward of virtue for a wise man, yet that god-like virtue longs, not indeed for statues fixed in lead, or triumphs with their fading laurels, but for rewards of a more stable and lasting nature.²¹⁰

What these more lasting rewards might be is spelled out in Scipio's telling of a dream he had in which Africanus appeared to him. Scipio is told that those who have been of service to their fatherland will receive a place of happiness in the heavens (6.13). But the spirits of those who gave themselves to sensual pleasures and who violated divine and human laws because of their desires—these will undergo many ages of torture near the earth before ascending to heaven (6.26 and 29). Cicero's main purpose here is patriotic—the good is defined as service to country, the bad as conduct which offends the gods and human laws.

After Plato the one author who makes the most extensive use of postmortem judgment for moral exhortation is Plutarch. In arguing against the Epicureans Plutarch points out on the one hand that fears of postmortem punishment may keep people from crimes and thus from a life of insecurity. On the other hand the hope of a victorious crown of immortality won by a life of virtue and of seeing the punishment of those who misused

²⁰⁸ *Metamorphoses* 15.153-75. See Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 44-49.

²⁰⁹ Cumont, *After Life*, 32.

²¹⁰ *De Re Publica* 6.8. Translation by Clinton Walker Keyes in LCL, vol. 16 (1928), 261.

their wealth and power allows people to lead lives of confident expectation. In either case, then, it is the prospect of postmortem judgment, not its denial, that leads to a pleasant life (*Non posse suav. viv. sec. Epicurum* 1104B-C; 1105C-D). Plutarch concludes another argument against the Epicureans (*An recte dictum sit latenter esse vivendum* 1130C-E) by outlining a postmortem judgment that offers three roads: the first two roads lead to a country of the godly and a happy plain, both presumably for the good. The third road is for those who have lived impiously (ὄνοσίωζ) and criminally (παρὰ νόμωζ)—these are thrown into a pit of darkness and oblivion. There are to be no literal punishments of the Homeric kind but rather obscurity and oblivion as the reward for “all failure to serve or to take action and all that is inglorious and unknown.”²¹¹ Such will be the end of the misguided Epicurean desire to “live unknown.”

Plutarch follows Plato in using myths as the vehicles for his most extensive treatments of postmortem judgment.²¹² In *De genio Socratis* 589F-592E Plutarch includes a story about the experience of Timarchus in the crypt of the oracle of Trophonius. Plutarch's main interest here is the account of the “*daemon*,” but he includes information on the terrible wailings coming up from Hades (590F) and the competition for souls between Hades and the Moon. The Moon rescues those whom Hades would snatch, except for the foul and unclean, who are made to fall away from the Moon and go down to a second birth (591C).

In *De facie quae in orbe lunae apparet* we hear a story which locates Hades and the Elysian Plain in the air (941A-945D). As the soul ascends there is a limit to the rising of those which are evil or unclean, whereas the good rise to an easy life (942F). The unjust and licentious souls will pay penalties, and even the good must undergo some purgation of the pollutions of the body (943C-D). Finally, the soul becomes a *daemon* and descends again to produce oracles, to participate in mystery rites, and to bring recompense on people. If they perform these tasks unjustly they are penalized by being confined again in human bodies (944D). Plutarch's interests in telling this myth lie mainly in the cosmology. Nevertheless, we see that the fate of souls after death is determined on a general moral basis.

The most extensive myth is found at the end of *De sera numinis*

²¹¹ 1130E. Translation by Benedict Einarson and Phillip H. De Lacy in LCL, vol. 14 (1949), 341.

²¹² On Plutarch's myths see Stettner, *Seelenwanderung*, 56-63; Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 2, 551-52; Roger M. Jones, *The Platonism of Plutarch* (Menasha, Wisc.: George Banta, 1916), 42-63.

vindicta. Earlier in the document, among various arguments in defense of God's just recompense Plutarch states that the truth of God's providence is inextricably connected with belief in the immortality of the soul. The appropriate honor or punishment comes only after death, just as the athlete receives his due only when the contest is ended. Yet such rewards and penalties in the other world are often disbelieved, which is why this-worldly recompense is also necessary (560F-561A). The myth comes in 563B-568A and tells about Adrasteia, who is in charge of the recompense of the wicked. She has three helpers: *Poine*, who punishes people during their life in the body; *Dike*, who punishes the more stubbornly vicious after their death; and *Erinys*, who imprisons those who are past all healing (564E-F). In 565A-E Plutarch expands on the work of *Dike*—she exposes the shameful deeds of those who have not been punished in their earthly lives and makes them undergo chastisements to remove their passions (565A-B). Some of these are healed, but others must be carried again into bodies in order to gratify their continued ignorant appetite for pleasures (565D-E). It is clear that Plutarch in the myth as well as in the whole treatise thinks of divine recompense primarily as a means of healing for the soul, although there are some souls which are past reform (564F).²¹³ Plutarch certainly does not intend these myths to be taken literally in their details, for the myths do not yield one consistent picture. These myths, together with Plutarch's more direct references to postmortem judgment, indicate that Plutarch saw the value of a belief in postmortem reward and punishment to deter from vice and to encourage virtue.²¹⁴

We have seen, then, that some authors did not disdain to promulgate belief in a judgment after death in order to lead people to a life of virtue and godliness. Either in the form of a one-time underworld judgment or in the form of a more flexible journey of the soul through judgments and reincarnations the just moral recompense after death could serve to underscore a moral view of the life of individuals. In most cases the view of judgment is used to affirm a rather general division between virtue and vice rather than any specific ethical principles. Seneca and Statius used judgment language to direct warnings at rulers, while in Virgil and Cicero judgment language was connected with the encouragement of service to one's country.

²¹³ Betz, Dirkse, Smith, "De sera numinis vindicta," 182. On this myth see Jones, *Platonism of Plutarch*, 42-48; Georges Méautis, *Des délais de la justice divine par Plutarque* (Lausanne: Les Amitiés Gréco-Suisses, 1935), 57-74.

²¹⁴ Betz, "The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre," 593-95.

Judgment as a Vehicle for Social Satire

It takes a bold stroke to find material for comedy in the judgments of hell, and no one from the ancient world did it so boldly as Lucian. There were precedents in *The Frogs* of Aristophanes and presumably in the lost *Nekyia* of Menippus,²¹⁵ but even Aristophanes did not make much use of judgment motifs in his Dionysiac tour of the underworld. Lucian leaves no doubt about his own beliefs on such matters: the general crowd of people allow themselves to be taken in by the myths of Homer and Hesiod about a judgment under the earth (*On Funerals* 2-10).²¹⁶ These popular beliefs proved to be very useful, however, for Lucian's satiric purposes in five works: *Dialogues of the Dead*, *The Downward Journey*, *Zeus Catechized*, *A True Story*, and *Menippus*.²¹⁷ In all these works postmortem judgment provides a point of view from which Lucian can cut down to size all distinctions of status, wealth, power, and philosophical and literary pretensions. Images of death and judgment allow Lucian to strip bare and expose to ridicule his cast of the arrogant and elite of his society.²¹⁸ In effect, Lucian uses postmortem judgment as the literary court in which to hold up his characters to the judgment of himself and his audience.

We can see how this satire works in the judgment scene of the *Menippus* (11-14). In the court of Minos Menippus sees the queue of "adulterers, procurers, tax-collectors, toadies, informers, and all that crowd of people who create such confusion in life."²¹⁹ Then come the rich and the money-lenders in irons. Minos examines (ἐξετάζων) each one carefully in order to assign his punishment. His harshest sentences fall upon "those who were swollen with pride of wealth and place."²²⁰ Minos then strips off all their trappings, and they stand naked before him. Then Menippus sees the place of punishment, where kings and slaves, rich and poor are all being tortured, but the poor only half as much as the rich.

In *The Downward Journey* the judgment scene takes place before Rhadamanthus, and the main object of interest is the tyrant Megapenthes (13 and 23-27). Wicked deeds are found to leave marks on the soul

²¹⁵ Rudolf Helm (*Lukian und Menipp* [Leipzig & Berlin: Teubner, 1906]) has convinced most scholars that Lucian drew heavily on Menippus.

²¹⁶ See also *The Dance* 60.

²¹⁷ Hans Dieter Betz, *Lukian von Samosata und das Neue Testament* (TU 76; Berlin: Akademie, 1961), 51, 81, 84-89. See also brief references in *Zeus Rants* 36, and *Lover of Lies* 25. See also (Lucian) *Affairs of the Heart* 49.

²¹⁸ Nilsson, *Geschichte*, vol. 2, 553-55.

²¹⁹ Translation by A. M. Harmon in LCL, vol. 4 (1925), 91.

²²⁰ Translation by A. M. Harmon in LCL, vol. 4 (1925), 93.

that become visible at the judgment. The tyrant is unveiled (ἀποκαλύψω) and shown up plainly (δείξω φανερώτερον) and condemned. In the *Dialogues of the Dead* 376 the dead on their way to Hades know that they will be judged and sentenced after the life of each is revealed (δειχθήσεται δὲ ὁ ἐκάστου βίος). In 450 there is a division by Minos: the pirate, temple-robber, and tyrant are sent to torture, the good ones to live in the Elysian Fields as a reward for their just lives. In *Zeus Catechized* 17-18 Lucian pursues a different track by having Zeus announce that there will be a postmortem judgment with punishments for the wicked and rewards for the good, in the court of Minos where the life of each person is scrutinized (ἐξετάζεται). The Cynic Cyniscus, however, questions the justice of such a judgment when it is Fate and Destiny that make people behave the way they do. Here Lucian pokes fun at the inconsistencies of popular religious beliefs. Finally, in *A True Story* Lucian has his hero reach the Island of the Blest, where Rhadamanthus is reduced to being an arbiter of the squabbles between ancient heroes like Alexander and Hannibal (2.5-32).²²¹ He comes also to the Island of the Wicked where punishments are taking place. In all of this Lucian finds opportunity to ridicule literary and philosophical pretensions.

For Lucian popular beliefs in postmortem judgment serve as a convenient literary device to unmask and poke fun at tyrants, the rich, the pretentious, the philosophical elite. It provides a radical point of view from which to lay bare the social tensions felt by his audiences. Yet there is also an assumption of a moral basis for judgment,²²² and in this sense Lucian's use of judgment language is similar to that of Plato, Virgil, and Plutarch.

3. Judgment and the Life of the Individual

Judgment and the Language of Individual Attainment

Now that we have taken a close look at the functions of postmortem judgment language in classical Greece and in the Greco-Roman world we can step back to see some characteristics that are common to all the material examined. One aspect which stands out clearly is that one's fate in the judgment is a matter of individual attainment, based on one's practice of virtue within society and confirmed by the reception of one's deserved status in the afterlife. Postmortem judgment is seen as

²²¹ See also *Dialogues of the Dead* 380-81 and 389, where Alexander is judged to be first, Scipio second, and Hannibal third.

²²² See Betz, *Lukian*, 183.

an extension of the individual's quest for praise or blame, reward or punishment. A number of features serve to demonstrate this point.

First, we have seen that philosophical views of the judgment of the soul stress the therapeutic value of a process of purgation and rebirth as the soul seeks to attain a final divine rest. This process corresponds to the individual's practice of a virtuous life through philosophy, as we see above all in Plato and Plutarch.

Second, judgment language has a close connection with one of the highest goals in Greco-Roman society—the earning of praise.²²³ According to Aristotle the virtues are the highest objects of praise, and vices the objects of blame.²²⁴ Demosthenes defines the legal process as an act of judging people on their merits in order to assign appropriate praise or blame (2.27). We have seen that death is regarded as a prime occasion on which to bestow praise for virtue. The chief purpose of a funeral speech was to praise the deceased.²²⁵ Praise for the dead person is also found frequently in consolation literature²²⁶ and in epitaphs.²²⁷ Such praise can be said to endure perpetually after a person's death,²²⁸ and the proclamation of praise by a city conferred the status of a hero who would live among the immortals.²²⁹ Such language is sometimes ambiguous as to whether the immortality of fame or a personal immortal existence is meant.²³⁰ In these cases mentioned it is a human judgment that the deceased is worthy of praise. In other cases a postmortem judgment by the gods bestows the praise or honor.²³¹ Finally, we have

²²³ Anton Fridrichsen, "Der wahre Jude und sein Lob, Röm. 2:28f.," in *Symbolae Arctoe*, vol. 1 (Societas Philologica Christianiensis, 1922), 47-48. The Stoic attempt to free people from concern for human praise only illustrates the power of this drive: Epictetus *Diss.* 1.18.22; 2.16.5-7; 3.23.7 and 19.

²²⁴ *On Virtues and Vices* 1.1, p. 1249A. See also *Eudemian Ethics* 2.11-13, p. 1228A.

²²⁵ Hubert Martin, Jr. and Jane E. Phillips in *Plutarch's Ethical Writings*, 398 and 408-10. Discussions of the funeral speech are found in Pseudo-Dionysius *Ars Rhetorica* (Usener-Radermacher, vol. 6, part 2, 277-83) and in Menander Rhetor (418-22). Menander Rhetor discusses the consolatory speech (413-14). All these discussions stress the necessity of praise in such speeches. In addition to the classical Athenian speeches we have also Dio Chrysostom *Oration* 29, and Aelius Aristides *Orations* 31 and 32. All are clearly concerned above all with praise.

²²⁶ See, for example, the *Consolatio ad Liviam*, lines 209-16, where Caesar's praise is seen as a recompense for his foster-son's death.

²²⁷ Peek, *GVI*, #287; #891; #892; #893; #1504; #1690; #1705 (*GG*, #73); *Greek Anthology* 7.60.

²²⁸ Peek, *GVI*, #1705 (*GG*, #73); Hyperides *Funeral Speech* 42; (Demosthenes) 60.2; Pseudo-Isocrates *To Demonicus* 38-39; Simonides, frag. 21 (in LCL, *Lyra Graeca*, vol. 2, 288-89); Tacitus *Agricola* 46.1.

²²⁹ Aelius Aristides *Oration* 31.15; Hyperides *Funeral Speech* 35-40; (Demosthenes) 60.34; Peek, *GVI*, #48 (*GG*, #22); #1772 (*GG*, #355); #1504; Peek, *GG*, #206 and comments on p. 307. See Jaeger, "Greek Ideas of Immortality," 138-39.

²³⁰ (Lysias) 2.80-81; Sophocles *Antigone*, line 817.

²³¹ Plato *Republic* 2.363E; Peek, *GVI*, #1294 (*GG*, #321); #1943; #1765 (*GG*, #391).

seen that the expression of confidence that the deceased will meet with a favorable judgment is itself an expression of praise.²³²

Third, a rich variety of language denoting individual status is used to refer to a favorable postmortem judgment, language that comes from the realm of civic honors and status. Plato speaks of the "prizes of victory" (νικητήρια) bestowed on the just by the gods (*Republic* 10.613B), and Plutarch uses similar images of the victor's crown.²³³ Various terms for honors appear with reference to postmortem judgment.²³⁴ The deceased can earn the prize (γέρας or ἄθλον) of a favorable judgment because of his or her virtue.²³⁵ Those who have earned a happy afterlife can be called "heroes,"²³⁶ or they may be said to take their place on thrones beside the gods or ancient heroes,²³⁷ or they may be said to have attained a preferred status.²³⁸ Again, the results of postmortem judgment are seen as extensions of the sorts of honors an individual would seek within the city in this life.

Fourth, a favorable verdict is often referred to as a "wage" (μισθός), indicating that postmortem judgment is seen as the payoff for individual exertion in life. Of course, the wages of virtue are often seen to be collected in one's lifetime.²³⁹ Often, however, the full payment comes only in the judgment after death.²⁴⁰ Such language lays stress on the deserved nature of the person's final judgment.

One is struck by the rich variety of terms and images used to express the hope for a positive judgment. Those who made use of postmortem judgment ideas did not think in terms of identity with a social or religious group that would, as a unit, receive salvation. Their hopes were expressed as individual longings, and the same exertions and goals which would win someone praise, honor, and status in the city would win

²³² For example, see Aelius Aristides Oration 32.34; (Demosthenes) 60.34.

²³³ Plutarch *De facie quae in orbe lunae apparet* 943C-D; *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* 1105C-D.

²³⁴ Τιμή and κῶδος; Hesiod *Works and Days* 169b; τιμή: Plato *Phaedo* 113E; Plutarch *De sera numinis vindicta* 560F; (Plutarch) *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 120B; Lucian *Zeus Catechized* 18; τιμή and κλέος: Peek, *GVI*, #1765 (GG, #391); ἀγαλλίειν (to honor): Peek, *GVI*, #1423 and #1154 (GG, #166).

²³⁵ Plato *Republic* 10.608C-D; 614A; 621D; Peek, *GVI*, #1764 (GG, #354); #881; #747; Plutarch *Comparison of Lucullus and Cimon* 1.2 (p. 521), with reference to Plato *Republic* 2.363D.

²³⁶ Peek, *GVI*, #531; #970; #1162 (GG, #316); #1477; Lucian *Zeus Catechized* 17-18.

²³⁷ (Demosthenes) 60.34, which also speaks of their rank (τάξις) with the brave in the Islands of the Blest; Peek, *GVI*, #642; #699; #805; #1162 (GG, #316).

²³⁸ προεδρία: Pseudo-Plato *Axiochus* 371D; (Plutarch) *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 120B; πρώτη τιμή: Peek, *GVI*, #747; πρῶτον ἄθλον: Peek, *GVI*, #1686 (GG, #71).

²³⁹ Seneca *De Beneficiis* 4.1.3 (*pretium*) and 4.22.2 (*merces*); Lucian *Philosophies for Sale* 24. The wage can be a peaceful death in old age: Peek, *GVI*, #907; #1102.

²⁴⁰ Plato *Republic* 2.363D; 10.612B-C and 614A; Cicero *De Re Publica* 6.8 and 26 (*praemium*); Propertius *Elegies* 4.11.99-102 (*pretium*).

similar boons in the afterlife. The same dynamic works on the reverse side, a negative judgment. We note that the special sufferers such as Tantalus, Ixion, Sisyphus, and Tityus were the most popular judgment images and that the Greeks developed a special fondness for the details of a variety of punishments in the afterlife. Surely these characteristics suggest that the crimes and punishments of each individual were uppermost in people's minds. An image of one common evil fate for the group of the wicked as a whole did not find much resonance. Whether for good or for ill, the Greek or Roman would stand on his or her own merits before the tribunal of Minos and receive an individually appropriate reward or punishment.

Divine Judgment and Human Self-Judgment

One activity which is quintessentially the act of an individual is the admission to oneself that one has acted well or badly. In the context of religious belief the question naturally arises: How is this individual consciousness related to divine knowledge and evaluation of human deeds and thoughts? More specifically, is the conscience regarded as having an independent validity, or is it connected with and validated only by divine judgment?

The abstract concept of conscience is clearly a rather late development in antiquity. The phenomenon of awareness of one's own guilt or innocence, however, was present long before people called it a "conscience." The most recent study of conscience in the Biblical world finds it present in the Hebrew Old Testament in the word "heart," which is seen as the center of the individual's spiritual life.²⁴¹ Hellenistic Judaism made use of Greek terms to express the idea more precisely,²⁴² but only in Philo does it play a major role. Philo emphasizes the divinely given nature of the conscience or "monitor" (ἐλεγχος)

²⁴¹ Hans-Joachim Eckstein, *Der Begriff Syneidesis bei Paulus: Eine neutestamentlich-exegetische Untersuchung zum 'Gewissensbegriff'* (WUNT 2:10; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1983), 107 and 111. He refers, for example, to 1 Sam 24:6; 25:31; 2 Sam 24:10; Job 27:6; 1 Kings 2:44; 8:38. See also C. A. Pierce, *Conscience in the New Testament* (SBT 15; London: SCM, 1955), 59. Pierce disputes the Hebrew background for "conscience."

²⁴² See Job 27:6LXX: οὐ γὰρ σύννοια ἐμαυτῷ ἄτοπα πράξας. On this see Pierce, *Conscience*, 55-56. συνείδησις is found in Wis 17:10; *T. Reuben* 4:3-4 (note the parallel with καρδία in 1:4). συνειδός is found in Josephus *Antiquities* 2.23-25. In addition to συνειδός Philo also frequently uses ἐλεγχος to express the idea of conscience; see Richard T. Wallis, *The Idea of Conscience in Philo of Alexandria* (Center for Hermeneutical Studies in Hellenistic and Modern Culture, Protocol Series 13; Berkeley, California, 1975), 2.

which then acts as a judge within the individual's understanding.²⁴³ For Philo, as in other Jewish references to "conscience," one's self-awareness is a divine gift and corresponds to God's own evaluation and judgment.²⁴⁴ In Judaism as a whole, however, wherever individual moral recompense either in this life or in a final judgment is discussed the stress is placed on God's knowledge and revealing of human thoughts and actions rather than on human self-evaluation.

Such was not the case in ancient Egypt. There it was precisely in the context of postmortem judgment that a moral self-awareness became important.²⁴⁵ This can be seen in the *Book of the Dead*, chap. 30, in which the deceased prays that his heart not bear witness against him in the judgment,²⁴⁶ and in chap. 125, in which the deceased pleads his innocence at great length before the "Discerner of hearts and Searcher of the reins."²⁴⁷ A demotic text on a first century C.E. papyrus contains the "Story of Setne Khamuas." This includes a judgment scene before Osiris in which the person's good deeds are weighed against his bad deeds in a balance.²⁴⁸ In the *Book of the Dead* this scrutiny is pictured as the weighing of the person's heart against truth (*maat*).²⁴⁹ In other words, the judgment consists of testing the truthfulness of the testimony of the person's heart or conscience.²⁵⁰ Although the image of weighing seems to have influenced both Jewish and Greek conceptions of judgment,²⁵¹ this Egyptian conception of the heart as an independent witness seems to be far removed from Jewish, Christian, or Greco-Roman conceptions of the conscience.²⁵²

The concept of "conscience" as we understand it in our Western culture certainly grew up on Greek soil. That somewhat confusing and

²⁴³ Wallis, *Idea of Conscience in Philo*, 8. See, e.g., *Fug.* 118; *Op. Mund.* 128; *Decal.* 87.

²⁴⁴ Eckstein, *Der Begriff Syneidesis*, 111. Philo *Det. Pot. Ins.* 146; *T. Judah* 20:1-5; Josephus *Antiquities* 2.23-25.

²⁴⁵ This is the thesis of Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, Chap. 1, "Ancient Egypt: Man's First Confrontation with Conscience," 6-48.

²⁴⁶ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Dead* (2nd ed.; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner; New York: E. P. Dutton, 1928), 150. See Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 37-38.

²⁴⁷ Budge, *The Book of the Dead*, 376.

²⁴⁸ F. Ll. Griffith, *Stories of the High Priests of Memphis* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1900), 45-48.

²⁴⁹ See, for example, the portrayal on the Papyrus of Ani, a reproduction of which is found as the frontispiece of Budge, *The Book of the Dead*; this papyrus dates from the New Kingdom, about 1320 B.C.E.; see Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 28-29.

²⁵⁰ Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead*, 40-41.

²⁵¹ Kretzenbacher, *Seelenwaage*, 23-54.

²⁵² On judgment in Egypt see also Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 248-57. He gives a selection of texts in German translation on pp. 316-27.

versal history does not need to be told here.²⁵³ For our purposes it is enough to point out a few important characteristics. The Greeks could speak of a "good" conscience, as in the saying attributed to Socrates, οἱ μὴδὲν ἑαυτοῖς ἄτοπον συνειδότες—these are the ones who live ἀταράχως.²⁵⁴ More often it is the guilty conscience which is mentioned,²⁵⁵ and usually in a way that focuses on the inner pain, anxiety, and shame that comes from one's awareness of having done wrong. No fear of human punishment or divine recompense is needed to produce an anxious conscience. In the words of Seneca:

... the greatest punishment of wrong-doing is the having done it, and no man is more heavily punished than he who is consigned to the torture of remorse.²⁵⁶

Most often no connection is made at all between one's moral self-awareness and divine knowledge of thoughts and actions.

This is true even when a regimen of self-evaluation is prescribed. We see this most of all in Seneca. For example, in *Epistulae Morales* 28.9-10, Seneca draws on Epicurus to point out that the knowledge of wrongdoing is the first step in self-reformation. Therefore, one should act as one's own accuser and judge. In *De Ira* 3.36.1-3, Seneca speaks of a daily self-examination, for "Anger will cease and become more controllable if it finds that it must appear before a judge every day."²⁵⁷ If a person conceals nothing from himself and truthfully praises or admonishes himself, then an untroubled sleep will follow.²⁵⁸ In such statements Seneca takes full responsibility for his own moral life. He needs

²⁵³ See Pierce, *Conscience* 13-16. He disputes the commonly suggested Stoic origin of the concept.

²⁵⁴ In Stobaeus *Eclogues*, Book 3, chap. 24, #13, in the *topos* περὶ τοῦ συνειδότες. See also Isocrates *Nicocles* or *The Cyprians* 59; Cicero *Tusculanae Disputationes* 2.64; Seneca *De Beneficiis* 4.34.3 (on the robust conscience of the wise man); *Epistulae Morales* 43.5; *Oedipus*, lines 765-67; (Lucian) *Affairs of the Heart* 49; Horace *Epistles* 1.1.61.

²⁵⁵ Pseudo-Isocrates *Demonicus* 16; Polybius *Histories* 1.84.10-11; Seneca *Epistulae Morales* 105.7; *De Clementia* 1.13.3; Epictetus *Diss.* 3.23.15. See Pierce, *Conscience*, 38-39.

²⁵⁶ *De Ira* 3.26.2. Translation by John W. Basore in LCL, vol. 1 (1928), 321. See also *Epistulae Morales* 43.5 and 97.15; Euripides *Orestes*, lines 395-96; Xenophon *Apology* 24; Plutarch *De tranquillitate animi* 476E-477B. It is, of course, also recognized that fear of punishment, in this life or in the afterlife, can increase the anxiety of a person and act as a deterrent: Xenophon *Anabasis* 2.5.7; Cicero *De Finibus* 2.53; Lucretius *De Rerum Natura* 3.1011-1023; Plutarch *Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum* 1104B-C, in which it is said that the fears of judgment keep a person from crime and thus forestall the anxiety of a guilty conscience. On fear see also Iamblichus *De Vita Pythagorica* 30.179.

²⁵⁷ Translation by John W. Basore in LCL, vol. 1 (1928), 341.

²⁵⁸ See also *Epistulae Morales* 6.1; *De Ira* 1.14.3. Pythagoras also is said to counsel daily self-judgment: Diogenes Laertius 8.22.

no final tribunal of a divine judgment to confirm or correct his own self-evaluation.²⁵⁹

How is such an independent conscience related to a theme which runs through most Greco-Roman religion and philosophy: divine knowledge of human thoughts, words, and deeds? We have seen above the prevalence of belief in divine moral omniscience in classical Greece, and this idea continues to be mentioned frequently in the later period by philosophers,²⁶⁰ historians,²⁶¹ and popular writers.²⁶² Yet hardly ever is any connection made between the human conscience and divine knowledge. At most the two can be seen to be parallel: fear of God's knowledge of one's wrongdoing and a guilty conscience both contribute to anxiety.²⁶³ Seneca goes so far as to boast that the soul of the wise man can bare its conscience to the gods without fear (*De Beneficiis* 7.1.7), and in the tragedy *Oedipus* (lines 765-67) he has Oedipus claim that his soul is conscious of innocence and "known to itself better than to the gods."²⁶⁴ Conceptions of postmortem judgment often declare that the person's deeds are known or will be revealed. Again, however, there is little connection with conscience; what is revealed is what the person has hidden from others. Plato mentions the necessity of stripping off the coverings of clothing, fair bodies, ancestry, and wealth in the judgment.²⁶⁵ The judges are often pictured as interrogators.²⁶⁶ Plato pictures souls as scarred by their crimes with marks that the judges see (*Gorgias* 524E-525A). Lucian uses a similar picture in *The Downward Journey* 24. Statius (*Thebais* 4.525-540) pictures Minos as forcing the confession of crimes.

What can we conclude from this examination of references to conscience, divine omniscience, and revealing in a postmortem judgment?

²⁵⁹ Eckstein, *Der Begriff Syneidesis*, 102-104.

²⁶⁰ Epictetus *Diss.* 1.14, the title of which is $\delta\tau\iota\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma\ \epsilon\phi\omicron\rho\alpha\ \tau\acute{o}\ \theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$; Plutarch *Adversus Colotem* 1124E-F; *De sera numinis vindicta* 562D; Iamblichus *De Vita Pythagorica* 30.174-75.

²⁶¹ Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 10.10.2.

²⁶² Plautus *Rudens*, prologue, lines 1-30; Babrius *Fables* 127; *Greek Anthology* 10.27; Lucian *Zeus Rants* 36; Heliodorus *Aethiopica* 8.9 and 13.

²⁶³ Cicero *De Finibus* 1.51. See also Seneca *De Vita Beata* 20.4-5; *De Beneficiis* 3.17.2-3. On this see Henry Chadwick, "Gewissen," *RAC*, vol. 10, 1050-51.

²⁶⁴ Translation by Frank Justus Miller in LCL, vol. 1 of the tragedies (1917), 493. Seneca's lack of a need for postmortem judgment is illustrated also by his idea that the manner of death is itself the day of judgment that will reveal a person's true quality: *Epistulae Morales* 26.5-6 and 79.17.

²⁶⁵ *Gorgias* 523A-524A. Referred to by (Plutarch), *Consolatio ad Apollonium* 120E-121D.

²⁶⁶ Plato *Gorgias* 526B; Pseudo-Plato *Axiochus* 371C ($\delta\nu\alpha\kappa\rho\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$); Virgil *Aeneid* 6.431-33; Seneca *Hercules Furens*, lines 579-81; Statius *Thebais* 8.101-102; Lucian *Menippus* 11-12; *Dialogues of the Dead* 376; *Zeus Catechized* 18; Plutarch *De sera numinis vindicta* 564E-565B.

It seems that there was little sense of any tension between one's own conscience and divine knowledge or judgment. Wherever the idea of moral self-awareness is mentioned it is seen to be an adequate independent guide to a life of virtue, a guide which needed no motivation or confirmation from the side of the divine. Wherever divine knowledge and judgment of human deeds and thoughts is mentioned there is no role for the conscience to play. We can conclude that the fear of postmortem judgment had little to do with the growth of the idea of "conscience" in Greece and Rome.

4. Summary and Conclusions

1. Greeks and Romans at the turn of the era learned about postmortem judgment from classical Greek sources: about the judgments of the underworld from Homer and Hesiod and about the judgment of the soul from Pindar and Plato. Beliefs in judgment after death were also advanced by the Greek mysteries.

2. A wide variety of sources in the hellenistic and early Roman periods testify to the continued vitality of postmortem judgment conceptions on the popular and religious levels. On the philosophical level, however, only the Platonists made much use of judgment language.

3. Postmortem judgment language served two main functions. First, judgment was used as a motivation in moral exhortation. Some did not feel the need for such a motivation themselves but nevertheless saw the usefulness of the fear of judgment for the control of the uneducated. Second, judgment language was used frequently as a means of consolation concerning death, both to express confidence in a happy afterlife and to eulogize the deceased.

4. Greco-Roman postmortem judgment language was focused mostly on the individual. The idea of judgment could help both to secure a person's moral life and to express the immortal destiny which that life would win. The kind of language used illustrates this focus on individual status: a positive outcome of judgment was often described in the language of civic honors and praise, while a negative outcome led to individual punishments for various vices.

5. Unlike most early Jewish judgment language, Greco-Roman views of judgment did not arise out of situations of group crisis or historical conflict. Judgment language tended to deal with the everyday concerns of the individual—death and morality. Greco-Roman conceptions did not generally speak in terms of a divine judgment that would overturn injustice and vindicate a particular group of people.

6. The Greeks and Romans thought of judgment as something that

would take place after the death of each person, never as a final apocalyptic act of God. Further, some philosophical views foresaw a process of temporary and repeated judgments of the soul.

7. Greco-Roman judgment conceptions lacked an authoritative doctrinal consistency and a belief in a single divine agent. Nevertheless, the powerful influence of Homer and Plato did engender a certain consistency in conceptions. Further, the central Greek ideal of justice helped to give views of judgment some uniformity even without a single divine judge.

CHAPTER FOUR

JUDGMENT AND COMMUNITY CONFLICT IN 1 CORINTHIANS 3:5-4:5

The only references to the eschatological future that occur within the first major section of 1 Corinthians (1:10-4:21) are the announcements of divine judgment in 3:8, 12-15, 17, and 4:5. Do these appeals to future judgment have any coherence with one another, and what role do they play in Paul's rhetorical strategy? To look at 1:10-4:21 from the vantage point of these future judgment passages might seem to be an inside-out approach. Yet I propose that our understanding of the function of these appeals is very much to the point in attempting to answer the three most vexing questions about 1 Corinthians 1-4.

First, what is the nature of the problem that Paul addresses in these four chapters? The four "slogans" of 1:12 are the usual starting point in responding to this question, with four major options possible:¹ (1) Paul is warning against the phenomenon of factionalism in itself and does not make any theological or ethical distinctions among different groups;² (2) Paul directs alternating attention to one party or another;³ (3) Paul is arguing against only one faction throughout 1:10-4:21;⁴ (4)

¹ Gerhard Sellin ("Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit und das Rätsel der 'Christuspartei' [zu 1 Kor 1-4]," *ZNW* 73 [1982], 69-70) identifies the first three options but does not recognize the fourth.

² Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 33-34; Grosheide, *First Corinthians*, 37-38; Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, 135-152; Willaim Baird, *The Corinthian Church--A Biblical Approach to Urban Culture* (New York/Nashville: Abingdon, 1964), 34-35; Balz, *Christus in Korinth*, 29-30.

³ Usually an Apollos faction in 1:18-3:4 and a Cephas faction in 3:10-15; so Johannes Weiss, "Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik," *Theologische Studien: Bernhard Weiss zu seinem 70. Geburtstage* (ed. C. R. Gregory et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897), 206-207; T. W. Manson, "The Corinthian Correspondence (1)," *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* (ed. Matthew Black; Manchester: University Press, 1962), 194; Gerd Lüdemann, *Paulus, der Heidenapostel*, vol 2: *Antipaulinismus im frühen Christentum* (FRLANT 130; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 122; John J. Gunther, *St. Paul's Opponents and Their Background: A Study of Apocalyptic and Jewish Sectarian Teachings* (NovTSup 35; Leiden: Brill, 1973), 11 and 300-301.

⁴ This is the most popular option; see Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 70; Hurd, *The Origin of 1 Corinthians*, 97-107. Some have seen the "Christ party" as the real problem: Lütgert, *Freiheitspredigt*, 89-96; Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, 199-206. The most popular recent candidate is an Apollos faction: Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 71, 74-79; Richard A. Horsley, "Wisdom of Word and Words of Wisdom in Corinth," *CBQ* 39 (1977), 224, 231; Birger A. Pearson, "Hellenistic-Jewish Wisdom

Paul is defending his own apostolic authority against the rebellious Corinthians.⁵ No exegete can make an informed decision on this issue without taking adequate account of the judgment passages, since they are centered around Paul, Apollos, and those who build up or destroy the church.

The second question concerns the relationship between the two large themes of 1:10-4:21—wisdom and the factional disturbances. In what way is wisdom regarded by Paul as the cause of the dissensions?⁶ Most often this question has been approached from the history-of-religions perspective (for example, the possible Gnostic connection). I would prefer to look at the question from a rhetorical perspective. How does Paul use the wisdom theme to attack the problem of factionalism? The most crucial passages for this question are 3:18-23 and 4:6-8, texts which are closely connected with the appeals to future judgment. In what way does Paul's future judgment language function as a weapon against Corinthian exaltation in wisdom?

The third question is closely related to the other two: what is the structure of Paul's argument in 1:10-4:21? The many suggested outlines of this section differ quite radically over the place of chapters 3 and 4 in the flow of Paul's discussion. It follows that there have been widely different assessments of the role of judgment language within the section as a whole.

1. *The Rhetorical Structure of 1 Corinthians 1:10-4:21*

There is almost universal agreement that the first major unit of 1 Corinthians runs from 1:10-4:21.⁷ After the opening address and thanks-

Speculation and Paul," in *Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. Robert L. Wilken; University of Notre Dame Center for the Study of Judaism and Christianity in Antiquity 1; Notre Dame/London: University of Notre Dame, 1975), 58-59; Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16," 518.

⁵ Dahl, "Paul and the Church at Corinth," 45-46, 55; although he does express reservations in a note at the time of this reprinting of his original article (61, note 50). Karl Plank ("Paul and the Irony of Affliction: A Literary and Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Corinthians 4:9-13" [Ph.D. Dissertation, Vanderbilt, 1983; now also available in published form], 18, 40-41, 86, 90-91) accepts an apologetic purpose for 1 Cor 1-4. See also Philipp Vielhauer, "Paulus und die Kephas-partei in Korinth," in *Oikodome: Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 2 (ed. Günter Klein; TBü 65; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1979), 171; J. S. Ruef, *Paul's First Letter to Corinth* (The Pelican New Testament Commentaries; Penguin Books, 1971), 7; John H. Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* (SNTSMS 26; Cambridge University Press, 1975), 189-91; Bünker, *Briefformular*, 53, 73.

⁶ Sellin, ("Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 69) sees this as the crucial question.

⁷ Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 50-51; J. B. Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles of St. Paul* (ed. J. R. Harmer; reprinted from 1895 edition; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 139; Allo, *Première épître aux Corinthiens*, 6; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*,

giving in 1:1-9 Paul signals the beginning of a new unit with παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί. The end of this large unit is bounded by another use of παρακαλῶ in 4:16.⁸ The words of 5:1 clearly begin a new topic. The framework provided by the double use of παρακαλῶ suggests that the enclosed text has the character of admonition,⁹ and this observation is confirmed by the fact that Paul describes what he has written as νοουθετῶν in 4:14. The content of Paul's admonition is expressed directly in the ἵνα clause following the opening παρακαλῶ (1:10) and the appeal to the imitation of Paul's ways expressed in the παρακαλῶ clause in 4:16-17. Paul tips his rhetorical hand explicitly one other time in 4:6, where the two ἵνα clauses explain the admonitory content of Paul's preceding exposition on himself and Apollos. In a broad sense, then, all of the material in 1:10-4:21 is arranged to fit into and serve as grounding for this program of admonition to unity.¹⁰

The smaller units within 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 are not hard to distinguish, but the flow of Paul's argument as a whole has been difficult to discern. Hans Conzelmann, for example, finds a collection of individual topics but no unity of style or content in 1:10-4:21. For him chapter 4 is something of an appendix on Paul and Apollos, ignoring the fact that the Paul-Apollos theme extends from 3:5 into chapter 4.¹¹ Most outlines reflect the difficulty in defining the relationship between the theme of

XXV and 55 (although they take 1:10-4:21 as a subdivision of 1:10-6:20; Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 5; Dahl, "Paul and the Church at Corinth," 44-45; Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God*, 262; John T. Fitzgerald, Jr., "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale, 1984), 238-39. Even those scholars who divide 1 Corinthians into two or more separate letters unanimously assert the unity of 1:10-4:21 (see Hurd, *Origin of 1 Corinthians*, 45), either as a whole letter in itself (e.g., Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 72-73; Walter Schmithals, "Die Korintherbriefe als Briefsammlung," ZNW 64 [1973], 266-67 and 288; Wolfgang Schenk, "Der 1. Korintherbrief als Briefsammlung," ZNW 60 [1969], 241-43; Christophe Senft, *La Première Épître de Saint-Paul aux Corinthiens* [CNT 2/7; Neuchâtel/Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1979], 18 and 32) or as part of a longer letter (e.g., Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, XL-XLIII and 12; Héring, *First Corinthians*, XIII-XIV; Dinkler, "Korintherbriefe," col. 18; Alfred Suhl, *Paulus und seine Briefe: Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Chronologie* [SNT 11; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1975], 208; Bünker, *Briefformular*, 52).

⁸ Carl J. Bjerkelund, *Parakalô: Form, Funktion und Sinn der parakalô-Sätzen in den paulinischen Briefen* (Bibliotheca Theologica Norvegica 1; Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1967), 141.

⁹ See the similar uses of παρακαλεῖν to introduce admonition in Rom 12:1; 15:30; 16:17; 1 Cor 16:15; 2 Cor 10:1; Phil 4:2; 1 Thess 4:1, 10; 5:14.

¹⁰ Fitzgerald ("Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 238-39) criticizes Dahl's view that 1:10-4:21 is Pauline self-defense.

¹¹ Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 82. Others who treat 1 Cor 4 as a sort of appendix are Weiss, "Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik," 200-01; Wendland, *Die Briefe an die Korinther*, 37; Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 10; Senft, *Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 32 and 64.

wisdom and the discussion of the dissensions. Some simply divide the chapters into two large sections: 1:18-3:4 on wisdom and 3:5-4:21 on the function and relationship of apostles.¹² Such a division, however, does not show adequately how the two themes are related to each other within Paul's overall purpose. E. Earle Ellis, Wilhelm Wuellner, and Vincent Branick seek another solution to the puzzle by suggesting that a separately composed midrashic homily (or homilies) on wisdom is to be found in 1:18-3:20, a composition which has been adapted to fit the Corinthian situation by descriptions of the situation and connecting links.¹³ Problems emerge, however, in their different assessments of 2:1-5 and 3:1-20, for it is not clear how these sections could relate to the midrashic pattern. This sort of analysis begs the question of how the scripturally based discussions of wisdom relate to the different types of material in 3:1-17 and chapter 4.

The lack of success in relating the wisdom sections of 1 Cor 1:18-2:16 and 3:18-23 to 3:1-17 and chapter 4 has resulted in a relative undervaluing of chapters 3-4 as a key to Paul's concerns. This bias has been furthered by the fact that the majority of scholarly attention since the turn of the century has been focused on the question of the background of the Corinthian theology in the history of religions, a quest that has found chapters 1-2 much more fertile ground than chapters 3-4. Two recent analyses attempt in different ways to remedy this imbalance. Michael Bunker analyzes 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 as an example of a sophisticated rhetorical letter.¹⁴ Bunker sees two major sections in Paul's argument: a consideration of the problem of party dissension in 1:18-3:23 and a personal apology in 4:1-21. The heart of the first section is the *probatio* in 3:1-17, preceded by a *narratio* in 1:18-2:16 and concluded with a *peroratio* in 3:18-23. The heart of the second section is

¹² With minor variations Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, XXV and 55; Allo, *Première épître aux Corinthiens*, XXV, 6, and 56; Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 72-73; Murphy-O'Connor, *First Corinthians*, 23.

¹³ Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity*, 51, 155-57, 213-14; he sees two separate homilies in 1:18-31 and 2:6-16; 3:21-4:21 is application. Wilhelm Wuellner, "Haggadic Homily Genre in I Corinthians 1-3," *JBL* 89 (1970), 199-204; he sees one homily in 1:18-31; 2:6-16; and 3:1-20; Wuellner is followed by James A. Davis, *Wisdom and Spirit: An Investigation of 1 Corinthians 1.18-3.20 Against the Background of Jewish Sapiential Traditions in the Greco-Roman Period* (Lanham, New York, London: University Press of America, 1984). Vincent P. Branick, "Source and Redaction Analysis of 1 Corinthians 1-3," *JBL* 101 (1982), 251-69; his is the most recent and elegant version of this approach, drawing on Ellis and Wuellner; 1:18-31; 2:6-16; and 3:18-23 form a separately composed Pauline homily on wisdom; 1:10-17; 2:1-5; and 3:1-17 deal with the concrete situation and the theme of unity.

¹⁴ Bunker, *Briefformular*, 17-18, 27, 47, 52, 73-75; the explicit readers are the whole congregation to whom the letter is ostensibly addressed; see pp. 53-59 on the structure of 1:10-4:21.

the *refutatio* in 4:1-13. The striking contribution of Bünker's analysis is that he sees 3:1-17 and 4:1-13 as the double core of Paul's argument. In this view 1:18-2:16 is a teaching section which sets forth the common ground between Paul and the Corinthians as an indirect preparation for the real commencement of his argument in 3:1-17. In Bünker's view the wisdom theme is decidedly subordinate to the basic problems of party strife and Paul's authority. In my view, however, Bünker's belief that 4:1-13 has the character of an apostolic apology is misguided and results in his overlooking the clear connections between chapter 4 and chapter 3. Further, such a technical rhetorical structure seems to be a Procrustean bed for Paul's style of argument.

Benjamin Fiore has a different approach to the structure of these chapters.¹⁵ He suggests that 1:18-4:5 falls into three paradigmatic sections (1:18-2:5; 2:6-3:4; 3:5-4:5).¹⁶ Each of these begins with a general statement in the first person plural (1:18-25; 2:6-16; 3:5-15), which is followed by one or two applications in the second personal plural or in "I" and "you" form (1:26-31 and 2:1-5; 3:1-5; 3:16-23 and 4:1-5). Then follow 4:6-13 as a clarification of the preceding figurative language and 4:14-21 as a reformulation of the exhortation of the whole section. Fiore is right to see the importance of the shifts in address. Yet his outline of the structure of the section is too rigid and breaks down at important points. I would agree that 3:5-4:5 is a unified section, but Fiore's outline obscures rather than clarifies how this section flows. He fails to note the change of tone and point of view that comes in 3:10, and vv. 16-17 and 18-23 surely cannot be lumped together in terms either of content or of form and point of view. Fiore points to an essential rhetorical component in the structure, but content and tone must also be considered in analyzing the way the section flows.

In my view the rhetorical structure of 1:10-4:21 clearly shows that Paul's main concern is the factional strife and that the discussion of the false valuation of wisdom is complementary. In 1:10-17 Paul opens by summarizing his knowledge of the situation and stating his basic admonition. Then in the major section from 1:18-2:16 Paul sets out in midrashic style a common ground for the understanding of individual spiritual achievement. A transition from the first to the second major

¹⁵ Benjamin Fiore, "'Covert Allusion' in 1 Corinthians 1-4," *CBQ* 47 (1985), 87-88; more fully argued in "The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale, 1982), 315-18. This is now available in published form.

¹⁶ The only difference between the article and dissertation is that in the article he abandons the unlikely division between 3:5 and 3:6.

section is found in 3:1-4.¹⁷ Having laid the groundwork in 1:18-2:16 and having brought their attention sharply back to the main business of admonition to unity in 3:1-4, Paul then launches into the second major section, 3:5-4:5, a more direct blow against the attitudes behind the factional strife. This section consists of a three-fold analysis of life in the church from the perspective of eschatological judgment in 3:5-17 (3:5-9, 10-15, 16-17) followed by two climactic applications: 3:18-23, which rehearses in midrashic style the wisdom theme from the perspective of divine judgment; and 4:1-5, which applies the perspective of future judgment more directly to the causes of the factional strife.

After the double high point which he reaches in 3:23 and 4:5, Paul takes a rhetorical breath, steps back to survey what he has written, and drives his point home from a new angle of approach in 4:6-13. Finally, 4:14-21 serves as Paul's conclusion, in which he appeals to his personal relationship with them as the ground for his deep concern and sharply expressed admonition in these chapters.

Thus I suggest that the major structural problem of 1:10-4:21—how to relate the sections on wisdom with those on the factional strife—can be used as the key to understanding Paul's analysis of the situation and his rhetorical aim. Paul sees the fundamental problem in the Corinthian church to be a tendency for individuals to seek status in the congregation on the basis of their demonstration of spiritual wisdom. One visible result of this pursuit of spiritual status has been a divisive weighing of the community's teachers against one another. But the Corinthians' tendency to exalt some and denigrate others is directed against other members of the congregation as well as the named leaders.¹⁸ Paul in 3:5-4:5 appeals to the promised judgment of God as a means of discouraging such

¹⁷ Many scholars have seen 3:1-4 as the conclusion of the argument of chap. 2: Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, XXV and 55; Allo, *Première épître aux Corinthiens*, XXV and 6; Karl Maly, *Mündige Gemeinde: Untersuchungen zur pastoralen Führung des Apostels Paulus im 1. Korintherbrief* (SBM 2; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1967), 61; Ruef, *First Letter to Corinth*, 17-18; Rolf Baumann, *Mitte und Norm des Christlichen: Eine Auslegung von 1 Korinther 1,1-3,4* (NTAbh, Neue Folge 5; Münster: Aschendorff, 1968), 171-72, 205; Horsley, "Wisdom of Word," 224; Martin Winter, *Pneumatiker und Psychiker in Korinth: Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund von 1. Kor. 2,6-3,4* (Marburger Theologische Studien 12; Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 1975), 208. Others, however, have seen 3:1-4 as the introduction to the following section: Grosheide, *First Corinthians*, 76-77; Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 7; Martin Widmann, "1 Kor 2,6-16: Ein Einspruch gegen Paulus," *ZNW* 70 (1979), 45. A few do recognize 3:1-4 as a transitional passage: Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 23-24, 70; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 70-71.

¹⁸ Davis, *Wisdom and Spirit*, 132; William Baird, "One Against the Other: Intra-Church Conflict in 1 Corinthians," *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul and John: In Honor of J. Louis Martyn* (ed. Robert T. Fortna and Beverly R. Gaventa; Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), 116-18.

individual jockeying for position on the basis of wisdom. This appeal is concerned not only with the congregation's regard for apostles and teachers but also with the way each individual thinks about his or her position within the Christian group. Paul uses future judgment language as one way to combat the detrimental social effects of the individual pursuit of spiritual wisdom.

2. Judgment Language and the Problem of Factional Strife in 1 Corinthians 1:10-4:21

1 Corinthians 1:10-17 as introduction

In 1:10-17 Paul makes a solemn appeal for unity under the name of Christ (v. 10), communicates his understanding of the situation (vv. 11-12), and lays the foundation for his following rhetorical strategy (vv. 13-17).¹⁹ The three verbal clauses dependent on ἵνα in v. 10 express the threefold purpose to which Paul's efforts are directed in chapters 1-4: unity in speech, in social organization, and in way of thinking. The phrase τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες apparently means "to be in agreement with one another," but it is possible that Paul has in mind the actual verbal nature of the Corinthian dissensions, as illustrated by the sloganeering referred to in 1:12 and 3:4, the verbal quarreling implied by ἐριδες in 1:11 and 3:3,²⁰ the flaunting of personal wisdom in speech in 1:17, 2:4, 2:13, and 4:19, and boasting in 1:29, 1:31, 3:21, and 4:7.²¹ The word σχίσματα implies a tear in the social fabric but not in this case a complete breakdown of the community,²² since Paul still addresses the

¹⁹ Bünker (*Briefformular*, 53-54) calls this the *exordium*.

²⁰ Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, 139. 1 Cor 1:11 is the only use of this word in the plural in the NT (in preferred readings); see BAGD, 309.

²¹ "To say the same thing" is a classical expression for political or social unity; see references in Heinrich, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 52; Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 151; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 10; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 31. This phrase is found only here in Paul, who more often speaks of thinking the same thing (Rom 15:5; 12:16; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 2:2; 4:2). Alfred Schreiber (*Die Gemeinde in Korinth: Versuch einer gruppensystematischen Betrachtung der Entwicklung der Gemeinde von Korinth auf der Basis des ersten Korintherbriefes* [NTAbh, Neue Folge 12; Münster: Aschendorff, 1977], 53-54) suggests that Paul here may have actual destructive verbal interactions in mind.

²² Heinrich, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 52; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 13; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 32. The word is used also in 1 Cor 11:18 (plural) and 12:25 (singular); in both cases it is also used in opposition to τὸ αὐτό.

congregation as a whole throughout chapters 1-4.²³ With the complementary words *νοῦς* and *γνώμη*²⁴ Paul encourages unity also in ways of thinking. Such an idea is common in Paul's letters (see footnote 21 above), and we see that much of Paul's argument in 1:10-4:21 seeks to create a unity-producing frame of mind, as opposed to destructive envy (*ζήλος* in 3:3), pretension to wisdom (3:18), and self-inflation (4:6-8, 10, and 18-19).

In v. 12 Paul gives a specific characterization of the incipient *σχίσματα* and the *ἐριδες*: people are identifying themselves in a divisive way with different teachers. For the purposes of this study I need only make a few observations on the much-controverted significance of these four slogans. First, whatever the phrase *ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ* may be—the slogan of a fourth Corinthian party,²⁵ a response of Paul himself,²⁶ or a scribal gloss²⁷—and whatever Cephas faction there might have been,²⁸ Paul chooses to discuss in these chapters only himself and Apollos, probably because these are the two most active and visible teachers who have worked in the congregation. Second, it is clear that the problem lies with the followers, not with the teachers themselves.²⁹ Third, there is no basis in 1 (or 2) Corinthians for identifying various theological

²³ Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 5; Baird, *Corinthian Church*, 34; Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 189. This is clear not only in the address in 1:1-2, but also in the repeated use of *ἀδελφοί* in 1:10, 11, and 26; 2:1; 3:1; 4:6 and *πάντες* in 1:10. Only in 4:18 does Paul refer to "some."

²⁴ Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 32.

²⁵ The grammar favors this interpretation, but the actual sense of such a slogan is difficult to imagine. This has been the most popular view (see Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 273; Baird, *Corinthian Church*, 32-33), although various types of theology have been attributed to a Christ party. Some who think of an actual Christ party are Lütgert, *Freiheitspredigt*, 89; Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, 199-206; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 12; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 45; Thiselton, "Realized Eschatology at Corinth," 514; Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 73, 92-94.

²⁶ Reitzenstein, *Hellenistic Mystery-Religions*, 426-27; Baumann, *Mitte und Norm*, 51-55; Wolf-Henning Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter: Untersuchungen zu Theorie und Praxis der paulinischen Mission* (WMANT 50; Neukirchen: Erziehungsverein, 1979), 163; Bünker, *Briefformular*, 117 note 28.

²⁷ Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 60-61; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, XXXVIII and 18; Héring, *First Corinthians*, 5; Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 17 note 2.

²⁸ Scholars in favor of a significant Cephas faction include: Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 154; Lietzmann, *An die Korinther*, 7; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 12; Héring, *First Corinthians*, 5; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, XXXIV-XXXV; C. K. Barrett, "Christianity at Corinth," in *Essays on Paul* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), 4; Lüdemann, *Antipaulinismus*, 122.

²⁹ Maly, *Mündige Gemeinde*, 19; Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2, 121.

points of view with one or another of these factions. Paul's theological polemics in 1:10-4:21 are directed against a common misunderstanding that lies behind the phenomenon of factional strife as such.³⁰ Fourth, Paul's discussion in the rest of chapters 1-4 suggests that these divisions over leaders were not the whole problem but only the most visible symptoms of a pervasive tendency toward divisiveness and spiritual competitiveness.³¹ Fifth, it seems likely that part of the attraction of such declarations of loyalty to factions was the sense of power, belonging, and status that would be attained.³²

In vv. 13-17 Paul begins to lay the groundwork for his appeal to unity. First and foremost, the unity of the church is grounded in Christ, who was crucified for all and in whose name they were baptized.³³ Paul dissociates himself from those whose misguided adherence to him would threaten the unity won by Christ.³⁴ Paul uses himself as a case in point to show the absurdity of elevating individual teachers divisively above the unity of cross and baptism. Then in v. 17b Paul introduces the first major section of his argument by reference to the nature of preaching, again not as a defense of his particular ministry against competitors but as his conviction about what it is for anyone to preach the gospel of Christ in a legitimate manner.³⁵

³⁰ Baird, *Corinthian Church*, 34-35; Machalet, "Paulus und seine Gegner," 192 and 195; Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament*, vol. 2, 121; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 33-34; Victor Paul Furnish, "Belonging to Christ: A Paradigm for Ethics in First Corinthians," *Int* 44 (1990), 151. L. L. Welborn ("On the Discord in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 1-4 and Ancient Politics," *JBL* 106 [1987], 85-111) argues for a political rather than a religious basis for the discord.

³¹ Helmut Koester, "GNOMAI DIAPHOROI: The Origin and Nature of Diversification in the History of Early Christianity," in *Trajectories Through Early Christianity* (with James M. Robinson; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 149.

³² Gerd Theissen, "Legitimation and Subsistence: An Essay on the Sociology of Early Christian Missionaries," in *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 55; Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 117.

³³ The Christological basis for unity is stressed in 1:1-9 and in 1:10; it is a constant theme in chaps. 1-4 (1:23-24 and 30; 2:2 and 16; 3:5, 11, and 23; 4:1 and 15) as well as in other parts of 1 Corinthians (notably chap. 12). On this see Friedrich, "Christus, Einheit und Norm der Christen," 147-70.

³⁴ It is probably mistaken to suggest that some Corinthians actually thought of Paul or any other teacher as a mediator of salvation through the act of baptism, as do Wilckens (*Weisheit und Torheit*, 15-16) and Sellin ("Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 93). The question "were you baptized in the name of Paul?" is parallel to "was Paul crucified for you?"--both are intended to reduce such divisive adherence to leaders to absurdity in the context of baptism and the cross.

³⁵ Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 191.

1 Corinthians 3:1-4 as a transition back to the problem of disunity

In 3:1-4 Paul effects a transition between the first major part of his argument in 1:18-2:16 and the second major part in 3:5-4:5.³⁶ In 1:18-2:16 Paul offers no direct criticism of the Corinthians and makes no concrete references to the Corinthian situation. In 3:1-4, however, Paul uses the vocabulary which he developed in 2:6-16, a vocabulary undoubtedly shared by the Corinthians, to offer concrete criticism. The primary link with 2:6-16 is the use of πνευματικοί in 3:1. In the light of chapter 2 Paul in 3:1 can only be using πνευματικοί in a paradoxical sense: all Christians are πνευματικός, but in spite of their spiritual nature Paul could not speak to the Corinthians as if they had full spiritual capacity.³⁷ In chapter 2 the opposite of πνευματικός is ψυχικός—this is an absolute contrast between those who have received the Spirit and those who have not.³⁸ In 3:1, however, Paul cannot use ψυχικός, because he does not intend to call their faith into question.³⁹ Therefore, he uses

³⁶ Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 71; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 71; Bünker, *Briefformular*, 39.

³⁷ Rudolf Schnackenburg, "Christian Adulthood According to the Apostle Paul," *CBQ* 25 (1963), 358. The double use of *ως* in 3:1 guards against taking the opposition of πνευματικός and σάρκινος as absolute. See Fascher, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 130-31. Some commentators would like to see two different senses of πνευματικοί in chap. 2 and 3:1: Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 71; Wendland, *Die Briefe an die Korinther*, 32; Maly, *Mündige Gemeinde*, 59. Winter (*Pneumatiker und Psychiker*, 220) is wrong when he says that Paul means in 3:1-2 that the Corinthians are really ψυχικοί, not πνευματικοί, because they do not think of the knowledge of the cross as spiritual wisdom (though Winter thinks of the ψυχικοί as a genuine but inferior class of Christian). In any case, unless one is prepared to argue that 2:6-16 is a non-Pauline interpolation (as does Widman, "1 Kor 2,6-16,"), it is inconceivable that there is contradiction or even a large shift in the meaning of πνευματικός between 2:13-15 and 3:1.

³⁸ In making this judgment I am aware of the great expenditure of scholarly effort (and lack of agreement) which has been devoted to these terms and their background in the history of religions. Some hold that in 2:13-15 the terms reflect Corinthian usage and divide Christians into two classes of people: Winter, *Pneumatiker und Psychiker*, 222; Horsley, "'How can some of you say?'," 206; Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, 25; Werner Georg Kümmel, in supplement to Lietzmann, *An die Korinther*, 171. But there is nothing in 2:13-15 that prohibits us from seeing πνευματικός as a term for all Christians; Paul's usage in Gal 6:1 would support this (although it must be admitted that 1 Cor 14:37 could point in the direction of a reference to a special spiritual elite). See Schnackenburg, "Christian Adulthood," 358. On the whole question see especially Pearson, "Hellenistic-Jewish Wisdom Speculation and Paul," 52-54 and the whole article; also his study, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians*.

³⁹ Reitzenstein, *Hellenistic Mystery-Religions*, 434; Walter Bauer, "Mündige und Unmündige bei dem Apostel Paulus," in *Aufsätze und kleine Schriften* (ed. Georg Strecker; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1967), 130.

σάρκινος, σαρκικός,⁴⁰ νήπιος,⁴¹ and κατὰ ἄνθρωπον⁴²—all of which are nearly synonymous and put the emphasis not on spiritual gifts but on moral quality.⁴³ The Corinthians are spiritual, but live as if they did not have the Spirit. The implied contrast of these critical terms with τέλειος in 2:6 does not mean that Paul envisions a spiritual elite but that the goal of all who have received the Spirit is to be mature, not babes in Christ.⁴⁴ The Corinthians' moral behavior is a barrier to all of them becoming fully πνευματικός. The milk-solid food contrast does not refer to a double set of teachings for beginners and elite, but is a picturesque way of describing the goal of deeper intellectual insight and moral maturity.⁴⁵

In v. 3 Paul turns from the time of his first preaching in Corinth to the present situation: there is among them ζήλος (zeal) and ἔρις (contention), which are further specified by the renewed reference to party slogans. The words ἔρις (also used in 1:11) and ζήλος suggest personal attitudes and activities which promote strife in the community.⁴⁶ The rhetorical structure of 3:3-4 indicates that Paul is repeating

⁴⁰ Paul seems to make no real distinction between σάρκινος and σαρκικός here. Properly speaking, σάρκινος refers to fleshly substance; 2 Cor 3:3 is the only passage in the NT where it has this proper sense. In all other uses, as here in 1 Cor 3:1, there is a great deal of confusion between the two similar words in the textual tradition. This fact in itself would make any attempt to discern a pattern in Paul's usage of the two words nearly impossible. A few try to argue for some distinction: Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 184-85; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 52. Pearson ("Hellenistic-Jewish Wisdom Speculation and Paul," 64 note 45) argues that σαρκικός and ψυχικός mean the same thing for Paul, but this misunderstands his moral point in 3:1.

⁴¹ On νήπιος as a term for Christian immaturity see Eph 4:14 and Heb 5:12-6:3.

⁴² κατὰ ἄνθρωπον would seem to be equivalent to κατὰ σάρκα (Rom 8:4, 12-13; 2 Cor 10:2-3); see Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 73. ἄνθρωποι in v. 4 is equivalent, perhaps more emphatic.

⁴³ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 80-82; Schnackenburg, "Christian Adulthood," 359-60, 364-65. The idea here is the same as in Rom 8:12-13 and Gal 5:16-25. James Francis ("As babes in Christ"—Some proposals regarding I Corinthians 3.1-3," *JSNT* 7 [1980], 43) is wrong when he says that intellectual immaturity rather than moral childishness is meant by Paul here.

⁴⁴ A majority of commentators attempt to make the πνευματικού/τέλειοι and the σάρκιννοι/νήπιοι into two separate groups—a spiritual elite that can handle βρώμα and the immature that can handle only γάλα, so that Paul's strategy is seen as using the Corinthian terms but reversing their identification of themselves; see, for example, Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 52-53; Branick, "Source and Redaction Analysis," 251. But many agree that no distinctive group is meant: Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 79; Schnackenburg, "Christian Adulthood," 357.

⁴⁵ Bauer, "Mündige und Unmündige," 138-39; Schnackenburg, "Christian Adulthood," 357; Baumann, *Mitte und Norm*, 275; Winter, *Pneumatiker und Psychiker in Korinth*, 218-19; Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16," 513. Heb 5:12-6:3 uses the milk-solid food contrast to encourage growth in understanding.

⁴⁶ Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 72. See Albrecht Stumpff, "ζήλος, κτλ.," *TDNT* 2, 882.

the criticisms of 1:10-17, but at the same time he is deepening the moral significance of these criticisms, calling into question the Spirit-filled nature of their behavior. There is a double use of the indefinite clause referring to their concrete behavior (ὅπου. . . and ὅταν. . .), each followed by a question implying their moral failings (οὐχὶ. . .; οὐκ. . .).⁴⁷ These accusations of fleshly behavior connect the discussion in 1:18-2:16 to the situation of factional strife,⁴⁸ so that 3:1-4 and 1:10-17 form a sort of *inclusio* around 1:18-2:16. Further, just as 1:17 leads into that section on wisdom, so 3:4 leads into the next section, 3:5-4:5, which deals with the problem in a more direct manner than does 1:18-2:16.

Divine Judgment and Factional Strife in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5

Paul, Apollos and the growth of the church (3:5-9)

The mention of himself and Apollos in 3:4 launches Paul into the next part of his argument (3:5-4:5), and the mention of himself and Apollos again in 4:6 signals the close of this section. Paul has himself and Apollos in mind throughout 3:5-4:5, although Apollos is mentioned explicitly only in 3:5-9 and 3:22 (here with Cephas also). Two questions naturally arise. First, in view of the three teachers mentioned in 1:12 and 3:22, why does Paul choose to speak in 3:5-9 about his relationship with Apollos only? Second, how does what Paul says about himself and Apollos contribute to his overall purpose—admonishing the congregation to unity in Christ?

There are three possible answers to the question, "Why Apollos and only Apollos?": (a) Apollos was himself Paul's main antagonist and personal rival in Corinth; (b) through no intention of Apollos himself those loyal to his style of theology were the principal source of the factional strife;⁴⁹ (c) Paul chose to speak about Apollos as one case in point, the most visible example of the absurdity of playing one Christian teacher against another. Of these options I think it is the last one which makes most sense out of the evidence.

Outside of 1 Cor 1-4 Apollos is mentioned in early Christian litera-

⁴⁷ Weiss, "Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik," 206-207.

⁴⁸ Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 7.

⁴⁹ This is the position of Sellin ("Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 74) and many others. Meeks (*First Urban Christians*, 117) suggests that the rhetorical superiority of Apollos was a large part of the issue. Schreiber (*Gemeinde in Korinth*, 124-26, 160-61) thinks they latched on to Apollos to further their revolt against the founder of the church, as a step toward maturity.

ture only in 1 Cor 16:12 and Acts 18:24-19:1.⁵⁰ In Acts Apollos is characterized as a Jew (probably Luke thought of him as a Jewish Christian before his arrival in Ephesus⁵¹) from Alexandria who was well-educated, eloquent, and an accomplished interpreter of the Scriptures.⁵² This characterization in Acts is the sole basis for the common idea that Apollos was a proponent of an esoteric spiritual wisdom which owed much to the hellenistic Judaism of Alexandria.⁵³ There is no reason to question Luke's information on Apollos on this point, but also "there is no ground for supposing that every Alexandrian Jew was a potential Philo."⁵⁴ Luke's assertion that Apollos knew only the baptism of John and was reinstructed by Priscilla and Aquila, although it seems to be confused,⁵⁵ is intended to demonstrate how an independent Christian missionary was gathered into apostolic unity.⁵⁶ Likewise vv. 27-28 stress the support of the Ephesian church for Apollos' ministry in Achaia and the helpfulness of his work.⁵⁷ Finally, in 19:1 Luke goes out of his way to imply that Paul and Apollos themselves did not meet at this time in Ephesus. Luke seems to be at pains to allow Apollos his independence

⁵⁰ The mention of an Apollos in Titus 3:13, even if it does refer to the same person as in Acts and 1 Corinthians, gives no independent information. *1 Clem.* 47:3-4 is wholly dependent on 1 Corinthians.

⁵¹ Eduard Schweizer ("Die Bekehrung des Apollos, Ag. 18,24-26," *EvT* 15 [1955], 251-53) is the only recent scholar to assert that Apollos (in Luke's source) was not already a Christian. See Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 39; Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 554.

⁵² ἀνὴρ λόγιος can mean either eloquent or learned (Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I: *The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 4 [ed. F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake; reprinted Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], 233). Probably Luke intends a combination of the two senses (Haenchen, *Acts*, 550). The phrase δυνάτοζ ὢν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς is in apposition to λόγιος and further specifies its meaning (Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 40). Luke thinks of him as an able Christological interpreter of the Scriptures (see 18:28). Luke probably understood this to include, in Apollos at least, a certain rhetorical ability (Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 61).

⁵³ This was a common view of earlier interpreters: Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 12-13; Weiss, *Earliest Christianity*, vol. 1, 334-35; Lake, *Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, 219-221; George A. Barton, "Some Influences of Apollos in the New Testament, I," *JBL* 43 (1924), 208; J. H. A. Hart, "Apollos," *JTS* 7 (1905-1906), 23-27. This idea has enjoyed a recent revival: Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 34; Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16," 518; Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 90.

⁵⁴ Barrett, "Christianity at Corinth," 4. See also Johannes Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1967), 182.

⁵⁵ See Haenchen, *Acts*, 554-57; Ernst Käsemann, "The Disciples of John the Baptist in Ephesus," in *Essays on New Testament Themes* (SBT 41; London: SCM, 1964), 143-48.

⁵⁶ Herbert Preisker, "Apollos und die Johannesjünger in Apg. 18.24-19.6," *ZNW* 30 (1931), 303; G. Schille, *Die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas* (THKNT 5; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1983), 375.

⁵⁷ The Western text of Acts 18:27 has the Corinthians requesting Apollos to come to them, but this seems historically unlikely; it may reflect 1 Cor 16:12. See Lake/Cadbury, *Beginnings*, vol. 4, 234.

from Paul and yet to show the harmony he enjoyed with the churches in Paul's sphere of influence.

This characterization of Apollos in Acts is essentially confirmed by Paul himself in 1 Cor 16:12. Paul's designation of him as "the brother" suggests Apollos' accepted status as a fellow worker, but not necessarily as part of Paul's own circle.⁵⁸ Paul admits no reluctance to have Apollos go to Corinth,⁵⁹ but it is also clear that he has no authority to send him, as he would send a Timothy. Whether θέλημα refers to God's will or the will of Apollos⁶⁰ makes no practical difference—the point is that Apollos is independent of Paul's urgings.⁶¹ Further, this verse assumes that Paul and Apollos spent some time together in Ephesus. It is even possible to think that Paul's knowledge of the Corinthian situation was supplemented by Apollos.⁶² So Paul confirms the picture of Acts that Apollos is an independent missionary with whom he has cordial relations.⁶³ Further, in 1 Cor 1-4 there is no evidence that Paul regarded Apollos personally as an antagonist or rival.⁶⁴ Paul does not blame Apollos himself for the factions any more or less than he blames himself in 1:13-17.

If we can rule out personal opposition as the reason for Paul's discussion of Apollos, then does Paul single out Apollos because he unintentionally spawned a faction which is the main or only opposition to Paul in Corinth? This is a harder question to answer with confidence, but there would seem to be no reason to doubt (on the basis of 1:12 and 3:22) that followers of Cephas also made their presence felt. There is no compelling reason to identify the Corinthian penchant for wisdom

⁵⁸ For ἀδελφός as a designation of a co-worker see Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; 2:13; 8:18, 22; 12:18; Phil 2:25; 1 Thess 3:2; Phlm 1, 7, 16, 20; Col 4:7, 9; Eph 6:21; see Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 144; Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 41.

⁵⁹ Barrett (*First Corinthians*, 392) is wrong to suggest that Paul and Apollos had decided that it would be best for Apollos to stay away from Corinth. This would make the words πολλὰ παρεκάλεσα disingenuous at best.

⁶⁰ Opinion is divided on this point. The train of thought suggests that Paul refers to the desires of Apollos (so Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 41; Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 517; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 392; Allo, *Première épître aux Corinthiens*, 462). On the other hand, Paul often states that his plans are controlled by God's will (Rom 1:10; 15:32; 1 Cor 4:19; see Gottlob Schrenk, "θέλω, κτλ.," *TDNT* 3, 59), and Paul uses θέλημα of the human will only in 1 Cor 7:37. In favor of 1 Cor 16:12 referring to God's will: Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 385; Héring, *First Corinthians*, 185; Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 217.

⁶¹ Grosheide, *First Corinthians*, 401.

⁶² Christian Wolff, *Der Erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther* (vol. 2 of Fascher, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*; THKNT; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1982), 223; Schreiber, *Die Gemeinde in Korinth*, 125.

⁶³ Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 94. Sellin ("Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 78-79) wants to rule out the evidence of 16:12 by claiming that this was in an earlier letter than chaps. 1-4 and thus at a time when Paul and Apollos had better relations.

⁶⁴ Carl Holladay, *The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians* (The Living Word Commentary; Austin: Sweet, 1979), 51; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 43.

with Apollos or only Apollos.⁶⁵ If this were the case it is hard to see why Cephas should be mentioned as well. That leaves only the third possibility: Paul singles out Apollos as a case in point, an example of how two of the teachers whom the Corinthians are using as mascots to promote themselves and berate others do in fact not behave that way to each other.⁶⁶ Perhaps Paul chose Apollos precisely because, having been with Paul in Ephesus and having been mentioned in the Corinthian letter to Paul, he is the example Paul can use with the most effectiveness.⁶⁷

To begin to determine how Paul's references to himself and Apollos contribute to his rhetorical goals we need to turn now to 1 Cor 3:5-9. The rhetorical structure of this section begins with the double question in v. 5a. Paul then answers with a double-sided point in v. 5b and 5c—they are equal servants, but with individual functions. Verses 6-8a develop in three contrasts the theme that there is unity under God in spite of diversity, and v. 8b caps the diversity theme by affirming that the individual differences will be confirmed by God's future judgment.⁶⁸ The γάρ of v. 9 relates the verse not just to v. 8a but to the whole of vv. 5b-8,⁶⁹ with συνεργοί forming an *inclusio* with διόκονοι in v. 5b.

The questions "What then is Apollos? What is Paul?" are answered on the one hand by the stress on their being servants of equal status under God. The relationship of Paul and Apollos with God is impressed on the reader in a series of four parallel statements:⁷⁰

What is Apollos? What is Paul?	Servants. . . as the Lord assigned
I planted, Apollos watered	but God gave the growth
neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything	but God who gives the growth
He who plants and he who waters are equal	and each shall receive his wages

Verse 9a sums up this line of thought: "For we are God's fellow workers," with θεοῦ in emphatic position.

⁶⁵ Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 217-18.

⁶⁶ So Heinrichi, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 118; Grosheide, *First Corinthians*, 80; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 39; Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 56.

⁶⁷ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 10.

⁶⁸ Thus Lightfoot (*Notes on Epistles*, 188) and Ollrog (*Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 166) are wrong to call v. 8b a parenthetical insertion between v. 8a and v. 9.

⁶⁹ Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 77.

⁷⁰ Weiss, "Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik," 206-207.

Whether συνεργοὶ θεοῦ refers to cooperation with God or cooperation with each other is a moot question; there is no reason to limit the sense to one or the other.⁷¹ The point is that working with God means also working in cooperation with each other. Συνεργός is a favorite term of Paul for those who work in the Christian mission,⁷² but in 1 Cor 3:9 it does not necessarily imply that Paul and Apollos actually worked together; it only refers to the regard in which Paul held Apollos. The source of their unity is further specified in 3:5bc: they are διάκονοι who have received their assignments from the Lord. The parallel with ὑπηρετάς Χριστοῦ in 4:1 indicates that "Lord" refers to Jesus Christ.⁷³ Although Paul follows his usual pattern in thinking of his work as dependent most immediately on Christ,⁷⁴ the dominant motif in 3:5-9 as throughout 1:10-4:21 is the more fundamental dependence of the church and its leaders on God. Ultimately all things, including wisdom and status, effort and success, must be viewed in the light of God as the source, goal, and standard of all human activity (1:25, 29, 31; 2:5; 3:19, 23; 4:5). The unity of Paul and Apollos in status is further emphasized in 3:7 in the statement that neither of them is "anything (τι)" compared to God⁷⁵ and in v. 8a in the statement that they are "one" in relation to each other. So their unity of status derives from their common work and their dependence on God for the success of that work. As far as

⁷¹ The only place where Paul undoubtedly uses συνεργός to refer to working together with God is 1 Thess 3:2, where this reading has slim manuscript evidence but is usually held to be correct because of the doctrinally difficult sense of such a "synergistic" statement. See Victor Paul Furnish, "Fellow Workers in God's Service," *JBL* 80 (1961), 366. Commentators line up on both sides concerning the sense of the phrase in 1 Cor 3:9. In favor of the sense of cooperation with God: Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 78; Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 188; Leon Morris, *The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 66; Georg Bertram, "συνεργός, κτλ.," *TDNT* 7, 874-75; Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, 6; Lietzmann, *An die Korinther*, 15; Allo, *Première épître aux Corinthiens*, 58; Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus*, 171; Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 58. In favor of the sense of cooperation with each other: Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 121; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 86; Grosheide, *First Corinthians*, 82-83; Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 9 and 68; Furnish, "Fellow Workers," 368.

⁷² See Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 9, 63-67, 71-72.

⁷³ Although a few commentators take κύριος here as a reference to God (Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 57; Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 119; Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 68), Paul virtually always uses κύριος to refer to Christ, except in OT quotations (see Werner Foerster, "κύριος, κτλ.," *TDNT* 3, 1087; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 76). In 2 Cor 6:4 Paul does speak of διάκονοι θεοῦ, but 1 Cor 4:1 is a closer parallel to our verse.

⁷⁴ See 1 Cor 1:1 and other letter openings; 1 Cor 1:17; 4:1, 15, 19; 9:1-2; 16:10; Rom 16:12; 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10.

⁷⁵ Paul elsewhere uses "to be something" as a term for status: Gal 2:6; 6:15; see also Acts 5:36. Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 74.

Paul is concerned, there is no ground for any rivalry between himself and Apollos either personally or as the objects of Corinthian factionalism.⁷⁶

The second side of Paul's answer to the questions of 3:5a is that Paul and Apollos are also unique individuals. This motif is introduced in v. 5c: "as the Lord assigned to each."⁷⁷ After describing three times their respective tasks of planting and watering in vv. 6-8a, Paul brings this theme to its high point with the idea of individual wages in v. 8b, again beginning the clause with ἕκαστος. In v. 8b the use of ἕκαστος and the double use of τὸν ἴδιον provide a contrast to ἐν in v. 8a, neatly conveying the duality of unity and diversity.⁷⁸ The use of ἕκαστος stresses the individually determined outcome of God's future judgment also in 3:13 (twice) and 4:5⁷⁹ and the individuality of the labor in 3:10.⁸⁰ Paul's work of planting, of course, was his initial preaching and gathering of the Corinthian church (referred to in various ways in 2:1-5; 3:1-2, 10; 4:14-15). The "watering"⁸¹ done by Apollos might refer either to making new converts or to advancing their understanding; most likely Paul is thinking of both senses.⁸² The point of this agricultural image is that both tasks, though different, contribute to the same goal—growth, which is defined in v. 5b as coming to faith.

In v. 8b it is said that the individual reward will be received according to the individual labor (κόπον).⁸³ Although the previous verses might suggest that τὸν ἴδιον κόπον refers to the different tasks, κόπος can hardly bear that meaning here. Rather, it introduces a new thought: the quality of the work or the effort of the individual. Κόπος is a favorite word of Paul to describe the effort and hardship which the

⁷⁶ Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 188. Other places where Paul claims to have a gracious regard for those who share his work although they are not associated with him are Rom 15:20; 2 Cor 10:15; Gal 2:7-10; Phil 1:15-18; 1 Cor 15:11.

⁷⁷ ἕκαστῳ could refer to those who believed (see, for example, Rom 12:3), but the following context makes it certain that the reference is to the individual tasks; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 84-85.

⁷⁸ Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 188.

⁷⁹ ἕκαστος refers to individual judgment also in Rom 2:6; 14:12; 2 Cor 5:10; Gal 6:5; 1 Pet 1:17; Rev 2:23; 20:13; 22:12; Matt 16:27.

⁸⁰ To v. 5c compare 1 Cor 7:17 and Mark 13:34; more distantly 1 Cor 15:38 and Rom 12:3.

⁸¹ There is a superficial contradiction with 3:2 in which it is Paul who engages in ποτίζειν. But there is no connection between these different images. Nor does the baptismal use of the word in 1 Cor 12:13 have anything to do with the task of Apollos.

⁸² Schreiber (*Die Gemeinde in Korinth*, 124) and Barrett (*First Corinthians*, 84) both think Paul means only making new converts.

⁸³ For the use of ἴδιος to stress the idea of something that is appropriately different for each individual see also Acts 1:25; 2:6, 8; Matt 25:15; Luke 6:44; Rom 14:5; 1 Cor 7:7; 12:11; Gal 6:5.

Christian mission necessitates.⁸⁴ In spite of the parallel with ἔργον in vv. 13-15 and the implication there that the quality of the labor is being judged, here in v. 8 Paul would seem to be speaking about the individual effort of each servant.⁸⁵ The evaluation of the labors of Paul, Apollos and others was probably one of the divisive activities among the Corinthians (4:3). The point in 3:8b is that each individual's labors will indeed be evaluated and rewarded—but only by God. So Paul in vv. 5-9 sets the unity of Apollos and himself in the context of their individual diversity in task and effort.⁸⁶

Although 1 Cor 3:8 and 14 are the only places where Paul uses the term μισθός in an eschatological sense, there can be no doubt that he is thinking here of God's future judgment. To be sure, in 1 Cor 9:17-18 μισθός refers to the present recompense for Paul's willing preaching of the Gospel. In 3:14, however, the future apocalyptic language is unmistakable, and the parallel use of the future tense λήμψεται in vv. 8 and 14 as well as the material parallel in 4:5 indicates that with 3:8b Paul moves the discussion into a new direction, a grounding of his argument in repeated references to future divine judgment from here to 4:5.

The fact that μισθός as a term for eschatological judgment is found only here in Paul, whereas it is used often in this sense outside of Paul, leads us to wonder what led him to speak of future judgment in this way in this context. We have already seen above in Chapter Three that Greeks and Romans sometimes expressed their hopes that their moral exertions in life would meet with appropriate "wages" in the after-life.⁸⁷ Also, we have seen in Chapter Two that śkr and its equivalent μισθός are used in Jewish texts to refer to eschatological rewards.⁸⁸ In

⁸⁴ 1 Cor 15:58 (parallel with ἔργον); 2 Cor 6:5 (plural); 2 Cor 10:15 (plural); 2 Cor 11:23 (plural); 2 Cor 11:27; 1 Thess 1:3 (parallel with ἔργον); 1 Thess 2:9; 3:5; 2 Thess 3:8. Κοπιῶν in Rom 16:6, 12; 1 Cor 4:12; 15:10; 16:16 (parallel with συνεργεῖν); Gal 4:11; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 5:12. On this word see Adolf von Harnack, "Κόπος (Κοπιῶν, Οἱ Κοπιῶντες) im frühchristlichen Sprachgebrauch," ZNW 27 (1928), 1-10.

⁸⁵ Joachim Gnlika, *Ist 1. Kor. 3,10-15 ein Schriftzeugnis für das Fegfeuer? Eine exegetisch-historische Untersuchung* (Düsseldorf: Zentral-Verlag für Dissertationem Triltsch, 1955), 119.

⁸⁶ The unity in diversity theme is used elsewhere by Paul to speak more generally about the unity of the church in spite of the variety among its individual members: Rom 12:3-8 and 1 Cor 12:4-26.

⁸⁷ Plato *Republic* 2.363D; 10.612B-C and 614A; Cicero *De Re Publica* 6.8 and 26; Propertius *Elegies* 4.1.99-102.

⁸⁸ In the Hebrew and Greek OT the words śkr and μισθός never have an eschatological reference even when used of divine recompense (Gen 15:1 and 30:18; Ruth 2:12; Isa 40:10 and 62:11; Eccl 9:5; Prov. 11:18; 2 Chron 15:7; Sirach 2:8 and 11:22). The eschatological use is found often in later texts: Wis 2:22 and 5:15-16; Pseudo-Philo *Bib. Ant.*

these Jewish texts the word is used to express the faithfulness of God to bestow a just recompense on individuals at the final judgment. In the realm of Christian literature the Synoptic Gospels record a number of sayings of Jesus which promise eschatological reward (Matt 5:12=Luke 6:23; Matt 6:1; 10:41-42; Mark 9:41; Luke 6:35), and other writings follow suit.⁸⁹ From Jesus' sayings particularly we see in the eschatological use of μισθός an emphasis on the belief that God demands faithful servanthood from his people and promises individually appropriate rewards.⁹⁰ It is implicitly understood that such rewards will be greater or less, although wherein the difference might lie is never made explicit (especially see Matt 5:12=Luke 6:23; Matt 10:41; Luke 6:35).⁹¹ We must also keep in mind that for Paul and his readers the word μισθός would have been most familiar as the common term for the wages received for daily labor, which would naturally vary according to the individual work.⁹²

In 1 Cor 3:8 it is the individual distinctiveness of Paul and Apollos which is underscored by the reference to their eschatological reward, and this emphasis by no means is an aside or contradicts Paul's emphasis on their unity. Their unity is defined by their allegiance to the one whom they serve and by the justness of God's recompense of their labor. It is only the Corinthians' human judgments which have raised their individual distinctiveness to a divisive level. In looking to God's future reward Paul declares a Christian's independence from such human judgments (compare Rom 14:4). As we will see, Paul's point in 3:8b is developed in a slightly different direction in vv. 12-15, although the use of μισθός in v. 14 assumes the same understanding of God's judgment of his servants as in v. 8b.

Some have suggested that what Paul is really talking about here is a

64:7; 1 Enoch 25:4; 4 Ezra 7:83; 8:33; 13:56; 2 Baruch 52:7; 54:16; 59:2; 2 Enoch 51:3. On the frequent use of *škr* for eschatological reward in rabbinic texts see Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 117; Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels*, 49-77.

⁸⁹ Rev 11:18; 22:12; 2 John 8; *Did.* 4:7; 5:2; 1 Clem. 34:3 (OT quotation); 2 Clem. 3:3; 9:5; 11:5-6; 20:4; *Herm. Sim.* 5.6.7; *Barn.* 19:10-11; 21:3; see also Ign. Pol. 6:2.

⁹⁰ See Günter Bornkamm, "Der Lohngedanke im Neuen Testament," in *Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum, Gesammelte Aufsätze*, vol. 2 (BEvT 28; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1959), 69-92; Wilhelm Pesch, *Der Lohngedanke in der Lehre Jesu verglichen mit der religiösen Lohnlehre des Spätjudentums* (München: Karl Zink, 1955), 114.

⁹¹ As I pointed out above in Chap. Two the idea that there will be varying degrees of rewards is not often expressed in Jewish texts outside of rabbinic literature. See 2 Enoch 44:3-5; *m. Abot* 2:16; 4:10. On this point see Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels*, 57 and 61-62; Mattem, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes*, 32-34; Devor, "The Concept of Judgment," 420-21.

⁹² See Friedrich Karl Karner, *Die Bedeutung des Vergeltungsgedankens für die Ethik Jesu* (Oedenburg-Sopron: Buchdruckerei Székely, 1927), 74-76; Pauly-Wissowa under μισθός, vol. 15, pt. 2, 2078-2095.

special set of rewards for faithful apostles and teachers, rewards not available to ordinary Christians.⁹³ There are a number of passages in which Paul refers to his own anticipated eschatological reward: Phil 2:16 and 2 Cor 1:14 (καύχημα), Phil 3:14 (βραβεῖον), 1 Thess 2:19 (στέφανος καυχήσεως); in 1 Cor 9:27 he desires not to be found ἁδόκιμος and in Gal 2:2, Phil 2:16, and 1 Thess 3:5 not to have labored "in vain." In none of these passages, however, is Paul anticipating anything different for himself from what any Christian might attain. This is indicated by the fact that most of these same expressions are used also to refer to the fate of Christians in general: 1 Cor 9:24 (βραβεῖον), 1 Cor 9:25 (στέφανος),⁹⁴ Gal 6:4 (καύχημα), 1 Cor 15:58 (κενός). With neither μισθός in 1 Cor 3:8 and 14 nor the parallel ἔργον in 4:5 is Paul speaking of a special level of judgment for apostolic laborers.

In 3:9 the double metaphor for the congregation—field and building—serves as a transition from the agricultural metaphor of vv. 6-8 to the architectural metaphor of vv. 10-15, which is then transposed to the image of the temple in vv. 16-17.⁹⁵ As v. 9 indicates, Paul is interested in these images for the church from the perspective of those who are responsible to God for its growth and stability. From the verbs "to plant," "to water," and "to make grow" in vv. 6-8a we might expect a word for "plant" here in v. 9 rather than "field." The word γεώργιον occurs only here in the NT, and the image is an unusual one for the church.⁹⁶ No doubt the emphasis on the field of labor rather than on the

⁹³ Especially Wilhelm Pesch, "Der Sonderlohn für die Verkündiger des Evangeliums (I Kor 3,8.14f. und Parallelen)," in *Neutestamentliche Aufsätze, Festschrift für Prof. Josef Schmid* (ed. J. Blinzler et al.; Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1963), 200, 204, 206.

⁹⁴ See also 2 Tim 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4; Rev 2:10 and 3:11.

⁹⁵ Walter Klaiber (*Rechtfertigung und Gemeinde: Eine Untersuchung zum paulinischen Kirchenverständnis* [FRLANT 127; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982], 35-41) discusses these three images for the church. Anton Fridrichsen ("Ackerbau und Hausbau in formelhaften Wendungen in der Bible und bei Platon," *Neutestamentliche Forschungen* [TSK 94 [1922]], 185-86; "Exegetisches zu den Paulusbriefen," *TSK* 102 [1930], 298-300) points out that the combination of agricultural and architectural images, drawing on country and city life, is frequent in ancient literature. See Plato *Laws* 1.643B; Dio Chrysostom 71.5; Jer 1:10; 24:6; 18:7-10; 38:28 (31:28MT); 49:10 (42:10MT); Deut 20:5-6; Sirach 49:7; Philo *Leg. All.* 1.48; *Cher.* 100-102; 1QS 8:5-10; 11:8; Luke 17:28. See also Philipp Vielhauer, *Oikodome: Das Bild vom Bau in der christlichen Literatur vom Neuen Testament bis Clemens Alexandrinus* (Karlsruhe-Durlach, 1939), 181-82 note 4.

⁹⁶ The closest the NT comes to such an image is in the parable of the wicked tenants (Matt 21:33-41 and par.) and the parable of the weeds (Matt 13:24-30, 36-43), in which the field (ἀγρός) is interpreted as the κόσμος. See also Heb 6:7-8. In John 15:1 it is God who is a γεωργός and the people are branches. For images of vegetation see Rom 11:17-24; Matt 3:10=Luke 3:9; Matt 7:17-20; 13:31-32 and par.; 15:13; Luke 13:6-9. In Judaism also vegetation is a frequent image for the people of God: Ezek 17:7-10; 19:10-14; Hosea 10:1; Jer 2:21; *Jubilees* 1:16; 16:26; 36:6; 1QS 8:5-10; CD 1:7; 1QH 6:15-16; 8:4-10; 8:20-21. Less often is the image of the field used: Isa 5:1-7.

plants serves to highlight the role of the workers. So also οἰκοδομή, here used in the passive sense of an edifice, denotes the church as the object of the labors of God's servants, a point which is developed in vv. 10-15.⁹⁷

Paul in 1 Cor 3:5-9 singles out Apollos as a highly visible independent missionary and, along with Paul and others, one of the teachers around whom the Corinthians have formed factions. In 1:13-17 Paul uses himself as an example to demonstrate the absurdity of any faction centered on a preacher of the crucified Christ in whose name they were baptized. In 3:5-9 Paul uses himself and Apollos as an example to demonstrate the absurdity of factions that play one servant of the Lord against another. On one level, of course, this challenges those who were actually partisans of Paul or Apollos (compare 4:6).⁹⁸ Further, however, this positive model of cooperation under God is applicable more generally to the Corinthian fractiousness and places their lack of such regard for each other in a harsh light.⁹⁹ Note that Paul says nothing about any actual cooperation between himself and Apollos; his concern is only the attitude with which they regard each other and should be regarded by the church. To latch onto the individual differences among the Lord's servants in an attempt to make the church a battleground for status is to overlook the fact that there is but one status in the church—servant of the Lord. If individual differences are to be recognized, that will have to wait for God's final reckoning with his workers. It is this last idea which is developed in detail in vv. 10-15.

The judgment of the work of the builders (3:10-15)

Verses 10-15 serve as a second answer to the questions of v. 5a,¹⁰⁰ but without explicit reference to Apollos. Verses 10-15 are not a digres-

⁹⁷ Paul does not elsewhere in the undisputed letters use οἰκοδομή or similar terms in the passive sense to refer to the church (Vielhauer, *Oikodome*, 76; Ingrid Kitzberger, *Bau der Gemeinde* [Forschung zur Bibel 53; Würzburg: Echter, 1986], 69). For the mission as the "building up" of the church see Acts 9:31; Matt 16:18; Eph 2:19-22. For the church as a building see Heb 3:6; 1 Pet 2:5; 4:17; 1 Tim 3:15; Ign. *Eph.* 9:1; *Herm. Vis.* 3.3.3. For Israel as a building see 1QS 8:5-10; 9:6; CD 3:19.

⁹⁸ Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 166; Fiore, "The Function of Personal Example," 323-24.

⁹⁹ Fitzgerald, "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 226-27.

¹⁰⁰ Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 208.

sion¹⁰¹ but expand on the thought of v. 8b, with the help of the image of the building from v. 9. The words "I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it" correspond to the words "I planted, Apollos watered" of v. 6. As in vv. 5-9 Paul's brief reference to himself in the first person singular gives way to impersonal and indefinite constructions (ἄλλος, ἕκαστος, τις), suggesting a wider applicability than to Paul and Apollos alone. Verses 10-11 form a complete thought, with the main point being the warning expressed in v. 10c: "Let each one take care how he builds upon it." Verse 11 gives the warrant for taking that warning seriously. Verses 12-15 form a tightly woven unit which develops the warning of v. 10c in detail. The possibilities for building on the foundation are pointed out in the εἴ τις clause in v. 12 that concludes with the warning in v. 13a, "each one's work will become manifest." The conditional sentence of vv. 12-13a is explicated in two parallel conditional clauses in vv. 14-15, each beginning with εἴ τις and concluding with an eschatological apodosis. The three clauses of v. 13b-d are somewhat parenthetical, further explications of v. 13a. Likewise v. 15b, "though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire," is an added qualification of v. 15a.¹⁰²

Throughout vv. 10-15 those who build on the foundation are designated by indefinite terms: ἄλλος (v. 10); ἕκαστος (vv. 10, 13a and d); τις (vv. 12, 14, and 15). Who does Paul have in mind? Some commentators suggest that Paul has in mind a particular group of opponents—the Christ party,¹⁰³ the Cephas party,¹⁰⁴ the Apollos party,¹⁰⁵ or other

¹⁰¹ Rudolf Bultmann (*Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe* [FRLANT 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910], 98) calls 3:11-15 a digression which does not relate to the problem of the parties. Wuellner ("Haggadic Homily Genre," 201) rightly rejects this view. Branick ("Source and Redaction Analysis," 263) goes so far as to say that 3:10c-15 is an insertion which was composed independently of its context.

¹⁰² This structure of vv. 12-15 is suggested by Weiss, "Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik," 208.

¹⁰³ A. Hilgenfeld, "Paulus und Korinth," ZWT 31 (1888), 183.

¹⁰⁴ This has long been a popular view and continues to be advanced: Weiss, *Earliest Christianity*, vol. 1, 337 (but in *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 78, he expresses doubts about this and suggests maybe a leader of the Apollos party is in mind); Manson, "The Corinthian Correspondence (1)," 194; C. K. Barrett, "Cephas and Corinth," in *Essays on Paul* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982); Vielhauer, "Paulus und die Kephas-partei in Korinth," 177; Friedrich, "Christus, Einheit und Norm," 155; Gunther, *St. Paul's Opponents*, 300-301; Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians*, 43-44; Schenke/Fischer, *Einleitung*, 95; Bunker, *Briefformular*, 127 note 85; Lüdemann, *Antipaulinismus*, 120-22.

¹⁰⁵ Haenchen, *Acts*, 555-56; Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 166; Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 75-76.

false teachers.¹⁰⁶ Such scholars usually take v. 11 as a polemical thrust against other teachers and their adherents who in Paul's view are building on a non-Christ-centered foundation. Those who think that the Cephas party is Paul's target suggest that v. 11 is directed against a claim about Cephas similar to that found in Matt 16:18. To be sure, Paul's tone in 3:10-15 is somewhat more threatening than in vv. 5-9 (and vv. 16-17 become even sharper), but he is clearly not concerned to root out a different Gospel.¹⁰⁷ Verse 11 is not polemical, for in vv. 10 and 12-15 Paul speaks only of those who build upon the one foundation, not those who lay a different foundation.¹⁰⁸

It would seem that Paul in 3:10-15 is intentionally vague and expects his readers to apply what he says to all their teachers¹⁰⁹ and in an extended sense to themselves as participants in God's work of building.¹¹⁰ Support for this view is to be found in 1 Cor 4:15, where Paul contrasts himself as the father of the congregation to the "countless guides" which they have.¹¹¹ Who these builders and pedagogues are is spelled out at least partially in 1 Cor 12:28-30 in the listing of apostles, prophets, teachers, and others who participate in the work of upbuilding. There is no reason to think that Paul in 3:10-15 is concerned only with missionaries who came to Corinth from the outside; there is ample evidence from 1 Corinthians that the Corinthians themselves were only too eager to participate in building on Paul's foundation (for example, 3:18; 4:8; 4:10; 8:1-2).

Paul develops the image of the church as a building in vv. 10-15 with the focus on the activity of those who do the work, not on the building as such. Accordingly, Paul identifies the foundation as Christ but gives

¹⁰⁶ Peter S. Zaas, "'As I Teach Everywhere, in Every Church': A Study of the Communication of Morals in Paul," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1982), 113.

¹⁰⁷ One only has to compare the tone of 3:10-15 with that of 2 Cor 11:4, 13-15; Gal 1:6-9; 5:12; Phil 3:2-4 to see that Paul does not treat those whom he regards as actual false teachers so mildly. Hurd, *Origin of 1 Corinthians*, 214; Maly, *Mündige Gemeinde*, 67. To be sure, Paul often castigates definite opponents in an anonymous and indefinite way (1 Cor 4:18; 5:5; 2 Cor 2:5; 10:7, 11; 11:4, 13; Gal 1:7, 9; 5:10; Phil 3:4), but in those cases the context makes it clear to the readers who Paul is talking about.

¹⁰⁸ Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 59.

¹⁰⁹ Fiore, "The Function of Personal Example," 31; Josef Pfammatter, *Die Kirche als Bau: Eine exegetisch-theologische Studie zur Ekklesiologie der Paulusbriefe* (Analecta Gregoriana 110; Rome: Libreria Editrice dell' università Gregoriana, 1960), 34.

¹¹⁰ Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 167 and 216; Kitzberger, *Bau der Gemeinde*, 70. This does not mean, however, that 1 Cor 3:10-15 contains a blueprint for the last judgment of all people. Origen set the pattern for much patristic and medieval interpretation of this passage with his view that Paul here sets forth a complete picture of the final judgment, with salvation as the reward of the righteous and a fiery purgation and final salvation for sinners; on this see Gnlika, *Ist 1. Kor. 3,10-15 ein Schriftzeugnis für das Fegfeuer*, esp. 115.

¹¹¹ Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 79.

no criteria for evaluating the further building. He is interested in the fact of the variety of workmanship rather than in defining what is good work and what is not.¹¹² So also the picture of a unified foundation and superstructure in vv. 10-11 shifts slightly in vv. 12-15 to focus on different levels of quality in the work of different individuals.

The image of foundation and superstructure could be used in a variety of ways in the literature of the time. Greco-Roman moralists sometimes used it to refer to the necessity for a solid beginning so that one's moral life could be developed soundly.¹¹³ The images of foundation and cornerstone in Isa 28:16 and Ps 117:22 (118:22 MT) were applied in some Qumran writings to the community's role within Israel (1QS 5:5; 8:7-8) or to the personal strength to be found in God's favor (1QH 6:25-27; 7:8-9).¹¹⁴ Within the NT, the image of the foundation refers in Heb 6:1 to elementary teachings, in Luke 6:47-49, Matt 7:24-27, and 1 Tim 6:19 to the moral basis of a religious life, and in 2 Tim 2:19 to correct teaching. A disciple of Paul developed Paul's use of the image for the church in Eph 2:20-22, where, in contrast to 1 Cor 3:10-11, the apostles and prophets are the foundation and Christ the cornerstone. Paul himself uses the image only here in 1 Cor 3:10-11 and Rom 15:20, where it also refers to the founding of a church. In the latter passage Paul avers that he does not want the positions to be reversed—he will not be the one to build on someone else's founding work.

What sort of activity does Paul have in mind with the verb *ἐποικοδομεῖν*?¹¹⁵ For Paul, the work of building is directed primarily toward the strengthening of the congregation in faith and unity.¹¹⁶ This is accomplished by the work of preaching and instruction,¹¹⁷ but this

¹¹² Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 171.

¹¹³ Epictetus *Diss.* 2.15.8-9; Plutarch *De prof. virt.* 85F-86A; similarly Philo *Gig.* 30; *Mut. Nom.* 211; *Cher.* 101. See also Plutarch *De fort. Rom.* 320B, where it is used of the growth of Romulus. In Philo *Som.* 2.8 foundation and superstructure refer to simple interpretation and allegory.

¹¹⁴ See also the references to "foundation" in 1QS 7:17 and 1QSa 1:12; Otto Betz, "Felsenmann und Felsengemeinde (Eine Parallele zu Mt 16,17-19 in den Qumranpsalmen)," *ZNW* 48 (1957), 53.

¹¹⁵ Note the literal use of *θεμελιοῦν* and *ἐποικοδομεῖν* with reference to the building of the temple in Josephus *Antiquities* 11.79. The verb *ἐποικοδομεῖν* is used by Paul only in 1 Cor 3:10-14. Eph 2:20 and 1 Pet 2:5 (where there is a textual problem) use it also with reference to the church. Col 2:7 and Jude 20 use it with reference to individual faith.

¹¹⁶ Kümmel in supplement to Lietzmann, *An die Korinther*, 171. This upbuilding becomes a strong theme in the later Pauline circle: Col 2:7; Eph 2:19-22; 4:12, 16, 29. See also 1 Pet 2:5. In the OT God is the one who builds Israel: Isa 54:14; Jer 24:6; 38:4 and 28 (31:4 and 28MT); 40:7 (33:7MT); 49:10 (42:10MT).

¹¹⁷ Vielhauer, *Oikodome*, 84-85; Maly, *Mündige Gemeinde*, 89; Pesch, "Der Sonderlohn für die Verkündiger des Evangeliums," 200. Paul can refer to his own work as building (2 Cor 10:8; 12:19; 13:10) or as strengthening (Rom 1:11), or to Timothy's work as strengthening (1 Thess 3:2). See also Acts 14:22; 15:32, 41; 16:5; 18:23. In the OT the

work is not limited to apostles and missionary teachers.¹¹⁸ The work is accomplished also on a person-to-person basis among all believers,¹¹⁹ and as each person is built up, so is the community as a whole.¹²⁰ In the light of Paul's frequent references later in 1 Corinthians to the importance of individual attitudes for the upbuilding of the unity of the congregation (6:12; 8:1; 10:23; 12:7; 14:3-5, 12, 26) we should see also in 3:10-15 a reference to the work of all believers. In vv. 13-15 Paul refers to the results of the upbuilding as τὸ ἔργον, which in this context does not mean Christian moral actions in general,¹²¹ but rather the quality of the church that results from the effort of each.¹²² Such labor for the church is in Paul's view not limited to missionaries and teachers but can be done by all believers.¹²³

Paul begins this new subsection in v. 10 by reminding his readers once again that his particular role and ability have been given to him by God,¹²⁴ whose grace Paul often claims as the basis for his work.¹²⁵ This grace has enabled Paul to be "a skilled master builder"¹²⁶ who

work of the prophet can be seen as the building up of the people: Jer 1:10; Sirach 49:7. Also 4QpPs37 2:14ff., where the Teacher of Righteousness is said to build up the congregation.

¹¹⁸ Günter Bornkamm, "On the Understanding of Worship: A. The Edification of the Congregation as the Body of Christ," in *Early Christian Experience* (New York/Evanston: Harper & Row, 1969), 163. For prophecy as the building up of the church see 1 Cor 14:3-5. On using spiritual gifts for building up the church see 1 Cor 14:12 and 26.

¹¹⁹ See Rom 14:19; 15:1-2; 1 Thess 5:11; 1 Cor 8:10 (negative); 14:17.

¹²⁰ 1 Cor 8:1; 10:23 (where οἰκοδομεῖν is parallel with συμφέρειν); see 1 Cor 6:12 and 12:7.

¹²¹ Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 207.

¹²² Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 164; Gnlika, *Ist 1 Kor. 3,10-15 ein Schriftzeugnis für das Fegfeuer?*, 123-24; Erik Peterson, "ἔργον in der Bedeutung 'Bau' bei Paulus," *Bib* 22 (1941), 439-41. For ἔργον as a designation for the church see 1 Cor 9:1. Rom 14:20 refers to an individual as "the work of God." Compare Phil 1:6. More often in Paul it refers to moral actions: Rom 2:6; 2 Cor 11:15; 2 Cor 9:8; Gal 6:4; see Col 1:10. There is an interesting parallel in Lucian *Hermotimus* 20, where Athena, Poseidon, and Hephaistus ask Momus to be the judge over which of them has fashioned the best artistic work. Lucian says that "he examined the work of each (θεασάμενος ἐκείνους ἐκάστου τὸ ἔργον)."

¹²³ The word τὸ ἔργον as the mission or its result is often associated with Paul or his associates (1 Cor 9:1; 16:10; Phil 1:22; 2:30) or with local leaders in general (1 Thess 5:13), but it can be used more broadly of all Christian labor for the building up of the church (1 Cor 15:58; 1 Thess 1:3; compare Eph 4:12). The word κόπος or κοπιᾶν shows a similar usage in that it usually refers to labor in the Christian mission but can be an activity of either missionaries or of Christians in general. Thus, those exegetes who think that 1 Cor 3:10-15 refers only to a special judgment of apostolic works are wrong.

¹²⁴ Note the use of διδόναι in v. 5c and v. 10. χάρις is the object of διδόναι also in Rom 12:3, 6; 15:15; 1 Cor 1:4; Gal 2:9; Eph 3:8; 4:7, 29; 2 Tim 1:9.

¹²⁵ Rom 1:5; 12:3; 15:15; 1 Cor 15:10; Gal 1:15; 2:9; Eph 3:2, 7-8.

¹²⁶ σοφός here means "competent," "skilled"; see Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 86; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 75. σοφός ἀρχιτέκτων is found in Isa 3:3, where it is used literally in a list of skills. Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* 6.7) speaks of Pheidias as

laid the foundation. This is certainly a reference to Paul's role in the beginning of the congregation, as the parallels in 2:1-5, 3:2, 3:6, and 4:15 indicate (see also Rom 15:20). As 1 Cor 3:11-12 shows, however, the foundation refers not only to the temporal beginning but also to the indispensable prerequisite for the existence of a church. Paul recognizes that others will build on his foundation with work of varying quality (πῶς), and he issues a warning that each will bear responsibility for his or her own work (βλεπέτω).¹²⁷

Before developing the warning in vv. 12-15, however, Paul in v. 11 gives a ground for the warning. This is formally a parenthesis between v. 10c and v. 12. Paul's foundation of the congregation is the one to be built on because it is the only one which makes the church's existence possible.¹²⁸ The present-tense participle τὸν κείμενον ("the one which is presently in place")¹²⁹ rules out any idea that Paul is polemicizing against those who would preach another Christ or another Gospel. The Corinthian foundation in Christ is firmly in place; there is no hint of any rival foundation. Throughout 1 Cor 1-4 it is Christ crucified who is regarded as the ground of the unity of the congregation;¹³⁰ a superstructure built on a foundation of human wisdom will fall short of God's standards.

Some commentators have seen vv. 10-11 as Paul's claim to a special apostolic status that exempts him from the judgment to which the further builders are subject.¹³¹ One only needs to look at 3:8b and 4:5 to see

a λιθουργὸν σοφόν. For ἀρχιτέκτων see Plato *Statesman* 259E-260A; Josephus *Life* 156. In the OT see Exod 31:4; 35:32-36:1; 38:23 (37:21MT), where Bezalel is given wisdom to be the master-builder of the tabernacle. Also 2 Macc 2:29; Sirach 38:27. In Philo Som. 2.8 Allegory is the σοφῆς ἀρχιτέκτονος who "builds upon" the foundation (whereas Paul as master-builder lays the foundation). Jay Shanor ("Paul as Master Builder: Construction Terms in First Corinthians," *NTS* 34 [1988], 461-71) points out that classical temple-building inscriptions use the term to refer to the supervisor of contractors, a sense which fits Paul's meaning quite well.

¹²⁷ This word is often used with reference to future judgment: 1 Cor 10:12; Mark 13:33; Luke 21:34; compare 1 Cor 16:13; Matt 24:42-43; 25:13. It is also used for non-eschatological warning: 1 Cor 16:10; Eph 5:15; Heb 12:25; Mark 4:24; 12:38; 13:9; Luke 8:18. See Heiligenthal, *Werke als Zeichen*, 211; Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 163.

¹²⁸ Vielhauer, *Oikodome*, 80; Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 166.

¹²⁹ On this phrase see Anton Fridrichsen, "Themelios, 1. Kor. 3,11," *TZ* 2 (1946), 316-17.

¹³⁰ 1:2, 4, 9, 13, 23-24, 30; 2:2, 16; 3:5c, 23; 4:1, 15, 17. Maly, *Mündige Gemeinde*, 67; Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 168. See also Phil 1:15-18; 2 Cor 4:5; Acts 4:12; Col 2:7. Christ is called the foundation only here in the NT, but elsewhere he is called a cornerstone (Eph 2:20; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet 2:4-8; Matt 21:42=Mark 12:10=Luke 20:17).

¹³¹ Haenchen, *Acts*, 555; Zaas, "'As I Teach Everywhere,'" 114. Vielhauer (*Oikodome*, 85) and Dahl ("Paul and the Church at Corinth," 47) think that Paul is emphasizing his authority over the church.

how far off the mark is such a view (see also 1 Cor 9:27). In fact, Paul's rhetorical intent is just the opposite, for to drive a wedge between himself and other workers would negate the effect of his arguments for unity in vv. 5-9. Rather, in vv. 10-11 he continues to sound the theme of unity of status within diversity of tasks and quality. The builders do different things, but they work on one building with a single foundation. The grace received by Paul for his task is available not to him alone but to all who labor in Christ (1 Cor 1:4; Rom 12:6; Eph 4:7, 29; 2 Tim 1:9). The master builder of the foundation is no less accountable for the quality of the building than his successors.

In v. 12 Paul shifts the focus from the one building with foundation and superstructure to the picture of many individual builders who work with a variety of materials. The indefinite $\epsilon\lambda\ \tau\iota\varsigma$ formula suggests that Paul is trying to state a general principle rather than make specific accusations, even though he may well have specific examples in Corinth in mind. In effect he is saying, "If the shoe fits. . . ." This formula binds v. 12 with vv. 14-15 and occurs again separately in vv. 17 and 18. Paul uses this formula frequently in 1 Corinthians to couch a ruling or a warning in an indefinite form.¹³²

What odd sort of building could Paul have in mind as he lists the materials in v. 12: gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw? Such lists of materials can occur in many contexts.¹³³ In most texts, however, the list functions to illustrate wealth or lavishness rather than a variety of quality ranging from good to bad as in Paul. None of the lists include such materials as hay or straw. We do find in Plutarch (*Progress in Virtue* 85F-86A) a symbolic description of the variety of materials which one can use to build a foundation for progress in virtue: the best is gold; a chance piece of wood or stone is poorer. Lucian in *Zeus Rants* 7-8 describes how the gods must arrange the order of seating at their council according to the value of the material of which their statues on earth have been made: those whose statues are made of gold are seated in the front row, then come those of silver, then ivory, bronze, stone, wood.

¹³² 1 Cor 7:12-13; 7:36; 8:2-3; 10:27; 11:16; 11:34; 14:37-38; 16:22. Elsewhere in Paul: Rom 8:9; 2 Cor 2:5; 5:17; 10:7; 11:20; Gal 1:9; 6:3; Phil 3:4; 2 Thess 3:10, 14; see also 1 Tim 3:1, 5; 5:4, 8, 16; 6:3; Titus 1:6. Elsewhere in the NT the formula is used most often in the parenthetic letter of James: 1:5, 23, 26; 3:2. Also in Matt 16:24=Mark 8:34=Luke 9:23; Mark 4:23; 9:35; Luke 14:26; 1 Pet 4:11; 2 John 10; Rev 11:5; 13:9-10; 14:9, 11; 20:15.

¹³³ Wealth and plunder (Num 31:22; Josh 6:19; 22:8; 3 Kgdms 10:2, 10-11; 2 Chron 9:1, 9-10, 21; 32:27; Josephus *Antiquities* 9.85; Diodorus Siculus 3.47.6-7; Dio Chrysostom 79.1; Rev 17:4; 18:12, 16); offerings to idols (Dan 11:38); materials of which idols are built (Deut 29:16; Ps 134:15 (135MT); Ep. Jeremiah 10 and 29; Acts 17:29; Rev 9:20; 2 Clem. 1:6; Diogn. 2:2).

The lists in these two texts illustrate a descending variety of quality, as does Paul's list.

Most frequently suggested as the image Paul has in mind is a temple, which would bind vv. 10-15 with vv. 16-17.¹³⁴ Some suggest that Paul is thinking of an eschatological temple or new Jerusalem, such as is described as built of gold and precious stones in Rev 21:18-21.¹³⁵ In fact, the closest parallels to the list in 1 Cor 3:12 are found in descriptions of the building of the tabernacle or temple in the OT: Exod 25:3-7; 31:4-5; 35:32-33 (gold, silver, stone, wood, among others, for the building of the tabernacle); 1 Chron 22:14-16; 29:2 (gold, silver, wood, precious stones, among others, for the building of the temple).¹³⁶ It would seem that the OT descriptions of the building of the tabernacle provided the starting point for Paul's list in 1 Cor 3:12. Especially Exod 31:1-5 uses a number of motifs which appear in 1 Cor 3:10-15: Bezalel is chosen by the Lord to be the master builder (ἀρχιτεκτονῆσαι) and is filled with a spirit of wisdom (σοφίας) in order that he might work with the gold, silver, bronze, hyacinth, purple, scarlet, linen, stone, wood (see similarly 35:30-36:1).

This background indicates that the temple image of 1 Cor 3:16-17 may already be in Paul's mind in vv. 10-15, but the important point to note is that this background has little to do with the function of the list in v. 12 in its context. As has often been pointed out, Paul's picture is not very realistic or consistent.¹³⁷ He seems to mix together two sorts of criteria—intrinsic value and durability in the face of fire, anticipating his image of judgment in vv. 13-15.¹³⁸ The point is that Paul's picture is controlled not by interest in the building as such or in any specific characteristics of each of the materials but rather by the idea of variety.¹³⁹ It is true that the list seems to divide into two groups of

¹³⁴ Peterson, "ἔργον in der Bedeutung 'Bau' bei Paulus," 440.

¹³⁵ Vielhauer, *Oikodome*, 182 note 5; see Isa 54:11-12; Tobit 13:16-17. J. Massyngberde Ford ("You are God's 'Sukkah' (1 Cor III.10-17)," *NTS* 21 [1974-75], 139-42) improbably suggests the succah built during the festival of Succoth. But she uses only late Rabbinic evidence to show that all the materials listed by Paul could be used in building a succah.

¹³⁶ See also 3 Kgdms 5:32-6:1a; 7:46-47 (1 Kings 7:9-10MT); 2 Chron 3:4-9. See also *Pseudo-Philo Bib. Ant.* 12:9 and the *Qumran Temple Scroll* 3:5-7 and 7:3.

¹³⁷ Vielhauer, *Oikodome*, 82. For one thing, it is not clear whether these are structural or decorative materials.

¹³⁸ Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus*, 39; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 75; Maly, *Mündige Gemeinde*, 68.

¹³⁹ Vielhauer, *Oikodome*, 80; Herbert M. Gale, *The Use of Analogy in the Letters of Paul* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), 85-91. On early allegorical treatments of these materials as disciples, doctrines, or moral actions see Gnlika, *Fegfeuer*, 115; Frederic H. Chase, *Chrysostom, a Study in the History of Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell; London: George Bell, 1887), 186-87 note 1. For Gnostic interpretation of these materials as psychic or pneumatic qualities see Elaine Hiesey Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul: Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 61.

three—the first three valuable and durable, the second three less valuable and susceptible to fire.¹⁴⁰ This division anticipates the pattern of the disjunctive εἰ clauses in vv. 14-15.¹⁴¹ Yet the overall effect of the list is to underscore the wide variety of quality possible in building on the one foundation, a point which is determined by the rhetorical situation and Paul's strategy.

The apodosis of the conditional sentence comes in v. 13a and finally begins to complete the implied threat of βλέπω in v. 10. Although by themselves the words φανερόν γενήσεται could refer to a natural disclosure with the passing of time, the rest of vv. 13-15 make clear that future divine judgment is the reference. This statement of v. 13a introduces for the first time a theme which is given great stress here in v. 13 and comes up again in 4:5—the eschatological disclosure of the quality of individual works. As in 3:8b and 4:5 the focus is on the fact that every individual will be held accountable for the results of his or her labor.

After the end of the conditional clause in vv. 12-13a there follow three short clauses in v. 13b-d which explicate the thought of v. 13a, introduced by γάρ, causal ὅτι, and explicative καί. The effect is a piling up of four clauses that speak of future judgment as disclosure, with four complementary verbs: φανερόν γενήσεται, δηλώσει, ἀποκαλύπτεται, δοκιμάσει. Verse 13b gives the time, v. 13c the means, and v. 13d ties the whole thought together. Nowhere else in Paul or the NT is there such an emphasis on judgment as the revealing of individual works as in 1 Cor 3:13 (except in the related 4:5). Most commentators, of course, are aware of this striking emphasis, but the question of "why?" has gone begging for an answer.

The word φανερός in 1 Cor 3:13a is also used in 1 Cor 4:5 (the cognate verb) and 2 Cor 5:10 to speak of eschatological disclosure of the Christian's work as the basis for God's judgment.¹⁴² The word also leads us to two passages in 1 Corinthians which form a curious counterpoint to 3:13. In both 1 Cor 11:19 and 14:25 Paul speaks of things which are revealed within the congregation in the present. I will say more about these texts below in the exegesis of 1 Cor 4:5.

With the explicative clause in v. 13b Paul begins to drive home more

¹⁴⁰ Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 191; Peterson, "Ἔργον," 440. Such as list with two disjunctive parts is found in 2 Tim 2:20. The triad of gold, silver, precious stones is familiar at Qumran: 1 QM 5:5-6, 8-9, 14; 12:12.

¹⁴¹ Compare 1 Cor 8:2-3; 11:6; Rom 8:13.

¹⁴² φανερός is used sometimes in the OT to speak of God's knowledge of human thoughts and deeds, but without reference to future judgment (Prov 15:11; 16:2; 2 Macc 6:30; 12:41). In Christian writings see the eschatological uses in Col 3:4; John 3:21; Luke 8:17; and especially *Herm. Sim.* 4.2-4.

forcefully to his readers the expectation of apocalyptic disclosure. The absolute use of ἡ ἡμέρα leaves no doubt in the minds of his readers that he is referring to God's final day of judgment.¹⁴³ Paul uses ἡ ἡμέρα by itself to refer to final judgment in Rom 13:12 and 1 Thess 5:4.¹⁴⁴ More often Paul designates it more fully as the day of the Lord or of Christ (1 Cor 1:8; 5:5; 2 Cor 1:14; Phil 1:6, 10; 2:16; 1 Thess 5:2; 2 Thess 2:2).¹⁴⁵ Only in Rom 2:5 (ἡμέρα ὀργῆς) and 2:16 (the day when God judges) does Paul explicitly refer to it as a day of judgment,¹⁴⁶ but in most contexts it is clear that Paul expects the final day to be a day of salvation or condemnation. This is also true in the parallel texts which speak of the Lord's coming or parousia (especially the close parallel in 1 Cor 4:5).¹⁴⁷ As the frequent references to "day" in Paul's letter openings suggest (1 Cor 1:8; 2 Cor 1:14; Phil 1:6, 10; 2 Thess 1:10), it was an established early Christian usage to designate the anticipated decisive moment of God's judgment as "day." This motif, of course, was based on the OT "Day of the Lord" and is frequently used in the literature of Judaism, especially the apocalypses.¹⁴⁸ Paul's statement that the day will "reveal" the works of each is unique, as is the use of δηλοῦν to refer to eschatological disclosure.

A causal ὅτι opens the third clause in v. 13, but the connection with v. 13b is unclear because the subject of ἀποκαλύπτεται is in doubt. Should it be read as "the day is revealed with fire" or as "the work of each is revealed by means of fire"?¹⁴⁹ "Day" is more natural as the subject because of its proximity in v. 13b.¹⁵⁰ Also, if "work" were the subject the two clauses of v. 13c and d would be a tautology. Further, ἀποκαλύπτειν is frequently used by Paul to refer to a theophany (Rom

¹⁴³ Allo (*Première épître aux Corinthiens*, 61) wants to find here a reference to a judgment during this life. The weight of Paul's and of general Biblical usage, however, points to the day of final judgment. So Gnlika, *Fegfeuer*, 124-25. On 1 Cor 3:12-15 as a parousia saying see Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn*, 99-105.

¹⁴⁴ See also Heb 10:25. Similarly ἐκείνη ἡ ἡμέρα in 2 Thess 1:10; 2 Tim 1:12, 18; 4:8; Matt 7:22; 24:36; 26:29; Mark 13:32; 14:25; Luke 10:12; 17:31; 21:34.

¹⁴⁵ See also Luke 17:24, 30; Acts 2:20; 2 Pet 3:10.

¹⁴⁶ More often called a day of judgment in the rest of the NT (Matt 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36; Acts 17:31; 2 Pet 2:9; 1 John 4:17; Jude 6), or also "last day" (John 6:39; 11:24; 12:48). See also Eph 4:30; 1 Pet 2:12; 2 Pet 3:12, 18; Rev 16:14.

¹⁴⁷ For example 1 Thess 2:19 and 3:13; Matt 24:42. Froitzheim, *Christologie und Eschatologie bei Paulus*, 9-10, 170-71; Roetzl, *Judgement in the Community*, 83.

¹⁴⁸ See above in Chap. Two. Other early Christian uses are found in 2 Clem. 16:3; 17:5-7; Thom. Cont. 143, lines 6-7.

¹⁴⁹ In the first case the ἐν πυρί would express accompaniment, in the second case ἐν would be instrumental. See Moule, *Idiom Book*, 77. BAGD, 730, favors "day" as subject and ἐν as expressing accompaniment: "makes its appearance with fire." So also Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 81; Héring, *First Corinthians*, 23. Compare 1 Thess 4:16.

¹⁵⁰ So Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 63; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 88.

1:17-18; 2:5; 1 Cor 1:7; 2 Thess 1:7).¹⁵¹ A good parallel to 1 Cor 3:13c is provided by 2 Thess 1:7-8: Christ will be revealed from heaven with a flaming fire. OT texts also describe the final day as a fiery theophany (Dan 7:9-10; Isa 66:15; Mal 3:19). So Paul appeals to the tradition of a fiery theophany to explain how the work of each will become manifest at the day of judgment.

In v. 13d, however, Paul puts a different slant on the function of the fire. It will test the quality (ὅποιον) of each person's work.¹⁵² The testing function of fire is the dominant thought in vv. 13-15,¹⁵³ even though the image shifts slightly from theophany in v. 13c, to testing in vv. 13d-15a, and to a narrow escape from fiery destruction in v. 15c.¹⁵⁴ In Jewish and Christian imagery fire most often serves as the instrument of God's punishing judgment¹⁵⁵ or as a purifying agent,¹⁵⁶ and there have been some who have tried to make Paul here in 1 Cor 3:12-15 speak of the purging fires of purgatory¹⁵⁷ or the tormenting fire of

¹⁵¹ See also 1 Pet 1:7, 13; 4:13; Luke 17:30; and the "theophany" of the Lord's enemy in 2 Thess 2:3, 6, 8. Not far from a theophany is Rom 8:18-19; 1 Pet 1:5; 5:1. The only NT use of ἀποκαλύπτειν to refer to the disclosure of human thoughts or works is in Luke 2:35.

¹⁵² The αὐτό after πῦρ in v. 13d is difficult, which led to its omission in some MSS. It could be taken with πῦρ, "the fire itself," but this makes little sense. More likely it has ἔργον as its antecedent, in which case it is pleonastic: Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 192; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 64.

¹⁵³ Gnlika, *Fegfeuer*, 125; Peterson, "ἔργον," 439; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 88; Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 60; Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn*, 100.

¹⁵⁴ Pfammatter, *Die Kirche als Bau*, 29; Friedrich Lang, "πῦρ, κτλ.," *TDNT* 6, 944; Gnlika, *Fegfeuer*, 125; Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus*, 174-75. Gnlika suggests that Paul also may have been thinking secondarily of fire as the means of destruction of the earth, as in the Stoic teaching on the cyclical conflagration and in 2 Pet 3:10-12. But there is really no trace of such an idea in Paul.

¹⁵⁵ Gen 19:24; Lev 10:2; Num 11:1-3; 4 Kgdms 1:10, 12; Ps 20:10 (21:9MT); 88:47 (89:46 MT); Isa 10:16-17; 26:11; 30:27; 66:15-16, 24; Jer 4:4; 5:14; 15:14; 17:27; 21:12; Ezek 22:21, 31; 23:25; 38:19, 22; 39:6; Amos 1:4-14; 2:2-5; Nahum 1:6; Mal 3:19 (4:1E); Judith 16:17; Sirach 7:17; 21:9-10; 4 Macc 9:9; 12:12; *Pss. Sol.* 15:4-5; *Jub.* 9:15; 36:10; *1 Enoch* 10:6, 12-13; 54:1-2, 6; 90:24-27; 91:9; 100:9; 108:3-6; *Pseudo-Philo Bib. Ant.* 23:6; 38:4; 39:9; 63:4; *Sib. Or.* 2.252-53; 2.285-312; 3.83-85, 618, 672-74, 689-91, 761; 4.40-48, 159-61; IQS 4:11-14; IQM 14:1; IQH 3:31; 6:18; 17:13-15; 1QpHab 10:3-5, 9-13; *T. Judah* 25:3-5; *T. Zeb.* 10:3; 2 *Baruch* 44:15; 85:12-15. In Christian literature: Matt 3:10, 12; 5:22; 7:19; 13:40, 42, 50; 18:8-9; 25:41; Mark 9:43, 48; Luke 3:9, 17; 17:29; Heb 10:27; James 5:3; 2 Pet 3:7; Jude 7, 23; Rev 14:10; 19:20; 20:10, 14-15; 21:8; *1 Clem.* 11:1-2; 2 *Clem.* 5:4; 7:6; 16:3; 17:5-7; *Ign. Eph.* 16:2. See Lang, "πῦρ," 936-38.

¹⁵⁶ Isa 1:24-26; 4:2-4; 6:6-7; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:2-3; IQH 5:15-16; Josephus *Antiquities* 20.166; *Herm. Vis.* 4.3.3-5.

¹⁵⁷ 1 Cor 3:12-15 has been one of the major Biblical warrants for the belief in purgatory; see Johannes Michl, "Gerichtsfeuer und Purgatorium zu 1 Kor 3,12-15," *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus 1961* (AnBib 17-18, vol. 1; Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1963), 395-96; Gnlika, *Fegfeuer, passim*; Jacques LeGoff, *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1984), 8; Townsend, "1 Corinthians 3:15 and

hell.¹⁵⁸ However, the verb δοκιμάζειν, followed by the possibilities of the work enduring or being consumed in vv. 14-15a, indicates that the fire serves to reveal the quality of the work so that the person can be judged for reward or loss. The fire is not said to purify or punish the persons themselves.¹⁵⁹

Paul himself speaks of fire outside of 1 Cor 3:13-15 only in an unrelated use in Rom 12:20 and in 2 Thess 1:8 (if this is indeed by Paul), in which the fire is regarded as a means of punishment (ἐκδίκησις). In 1 Cor 3 Paul has in mind with τὸ πῦρ δοκιμάσει the image of the refining of metals, which was a popular literary metaphor.¹⁶⁰ The verb δοκιμάζειν is also used without the image of fire to refer to testing the quality of people.¹⁶¹ Paul himself and the rest of the NT never elsewhere use δοκιμάζειν to refer to the process of future divine judgment, although Paul does use cognates to refer to divine testing and approval.¹⁶² In fact the only parallels to this sort of eschatological testing of individual works by fire come in texts later than Paul.¹⁶³ It appears that Paul in 1 Cor 3 has put together a description of final divine judgment that is unique in its emphasis on the disclosure and testing of individual works.

We return to the question of why Paul in 1 Cor 3 makes this unique emphasis, which he reinforces again at the climax of the section in 4:5. I suggest that the rhetorical situation in 1 Cor 1-4 led Paul to employ judgment images in this daring and unusual way. He recognized that the Corinthians were attempting to examine, test, compare, and judge the wisdom and work of their leaders and of one another. Paul is telling them not only to wait and allow God to reward the labor of each (3:8b)

the School of Shammai," 500. The most recent cautious support for the idea of purgatory in 1 Cor 3:12-15 is by Ethelbert Stauffer, *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM, 1955), 212. Michl (p. 401) sees in 1 Cor only the seed for the later development of purgatory; so also Allo, *Première épître aux Corinthiens*, 62-63. Almost all recent commentators, including Roman Catholics, rightly deny that the idea of purgatory can be found in 1 Cor 3. See Hans Bietenhard, "Kennt das Neue Testament die Vorstellung vom Fegefeuer?," *TZ* 3 (1947), 104.

¹⁵⁸ This was the interpretation of John Chrysostom, Homily 9 on 1 Cor 3:12-15. Among modern interpreters, it was the view of Kabisch, *Die Eschatologie des Paulus*, 247.

¹⁵⁹ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 89.

¹⁶⁰ Ps 11:7 (12:6MT); Prov 17:3; 27:21; Jer 6:27-30; Zech 13:9; Philo *Leg. All.* 1.77; *Quis rerum div. heres sit* 308; 1 Pet 1:7. The metaphor also occurs without the verb δοκιμάζειν: Ovid *Tristia* 1.5.25-26; Maximus of Tyre 11.2ab (Hobein, p. 129, lines 11-16); Job 23:10; Mal 3:3; Sirach 2:5; Wis 3:6; CD 20:1-8; Rev 3:18; *Herm. Vis.* 4.3.3-5. See also texts which speak of fire testing people without using the metaphor of metals: Ps 16:3; 25:2 (26:2MT); 65:10 (66:10MT); Jer 9:6 (9:7MT); *Did.* 16:5.

¹⁶¹ Isocrates *Panathenaicus* 39; Plutarch *De def. or.* 421A; Ps 138:1 and 23 (139MT); Jer 11:20; 12:3; 17:10; 20:12; Josephus *Antiquities* 1.233; 3.15; see also James 1:12.

¹⁶² Rom 16:10; 1 Cor 9:27; 11:19; 2 Cor 10:18; 13:7; 1 Thess 2:4; see also 1 Tim 2:15.

¹⁶³ *Testament of Abraham* 12-13; 2 *Bar.* 48:39-43; *Sib. Or.* 8.410-23; Lactantius *Div. Inst.* 7.21.6-8. See also 2 *Enoch* 49:2-3, where the means is a scales rather than fire.

but also to wait and see how each one's work will fare before God's judgment. Only at the final day can the quality of work be adequately disclosed.

The results of the testing by fire in the final judgment are stated in the disjunctive *ἐἰ* clauses in vv. 14-15a. Surely, however, in view of the list of six materials of varying quality in v. 12 Paul intends his readers to think not merely of two possibilities but of a variety of possibilities which fall into two broad groups. The work of some in the church will prove to be of lasting value; it will survive the testing fire and be rewarded.¹⁶⁴ Paul makes the same point more directly in 4:5: hearts are revealed and praise is given by God. Paul elsewhere speaks about such eschatological rewards when he states that the congregation which results from his work will serve as his boast or crown at the judgment (2 Cor 1:14; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 2:19). Paul never defines just what such rewards will be, but it is clear that he anticipates a special joy for himself and other faithful laborers when God recognizes their valuable work.

Some Christian laborers, however, will see the results of their efforts consumed in the fire. Their work has the quality of wood, hay, or stubble—things notorious for their flammability.¹⁶⁵ In this case a person will "suffer loss" (ζημιωθήσεται). Although a few commentators have taken this word to mean actual (temporary) punishment of the person,¹⁶⁶ more likely it simply refers to a loss of the potential reward.¹⁶⁷ Those who think that Paul has an actual punishment in mind appeal to 1 Cor 5:5 and 11:32 for support. In 11:32, however, he refers to present chastisement which is designed to keep Christians faithful and so avoid final condemnation. In 5:5 he also refers to a present destruction of the flesh; in any case, 5:5 is so unclear in sense that it can hardly serve to help interpret 3:15.¹⁶⁸ The word ζημιούω by itself

¹⁶⁴ The parallel with the future tense κατακαήσεται suggests that the accenting of μένει as future tense is correct. Compare 1 Cor 13:13, where μένει (probably present tense) describes faith, hope, and love as eschatologically abiding works, in contrast to non-abiding works such as prophecy and tongues.

¹⁶⁵ Especially stubble: Exod 15:7; Isa 5:24; 47:14; Joel 2:5; Nahum 1:10; Mal 3:19 (4:1E); Wis 3:7; *Apocalypse of Elijah* 1:4. Also wood and stubble: Zech 12:6. See also Matt 3:12=Luke 3:17; Matt 13:30, 40; Rev 8:7; 17:16; 18:8. Diodorus Siculus 20.65.1 tells of huts engulfed in flames because they were made of stubble and grass.

¹⁶⁶ Lietzmann, *An die Korinther*, 17; Allo, *Première Éptre aux Corinthiens*, 62; Senft, *Première Éptre aux Corinthiens*, 60; BAGD, 338.

¹⁶⁷ Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 129; Gnllka, *Fegfeuer*, 127; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 89; Albrecht Stumpff, "ζημιω, ζημιωω," *TDNT* 2, 890; Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn*, 104; Michl, "Gerichtsfeuer und Purgatorium," 398; Judith M. Gundry Volf, *Paul and Perseverance: Staying in and Falling Away* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990), 242, 261.

¹⁶⁸ See Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes*, 109-110.

can refer to punishment,¹⁶⁹ even eternal damnation.¹⁷⁰ It can equally well refer to a loss such as a payment of a fine.¹⁷¹ Paul never speaks of final judgment as a two stage process of temporary punishment and final salvation. To suffer the loss of one's eschatological reward is for Paul equivalent to having labored "in vain" (1 Cor 15:58; Gal 2:2; 4:11; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 3:5).¹⁷² 2 John 8 contains a similar idea: "Look to yourselves, that you may not lose (ἀπολέσητε) what you have worked for, but may win a full reward."

In 1 Cor 3:15b is an added qualification to the parallel statements of vv. 14-15a. The words αὐτὸς δὲ indicate that Paul now turns to speak of the person's ultimate fate, as opposed to the mere burning of the work and loss of reward.¹⁷³ Is the sense of σωθήσεται limited to the image of the burning of a building and narrow escape from the flames,¹⁷⁴ or does the word have its full sense of final salvation? The latter option, as most commentators agree,¹⁷⁵ is the correct one, in view of the fact that Paul elsewhere always uses σῶζειν in its full soteriological sense.¹⁷⁶ Whatever difficulties this passage may create for systematic theologians, it is quite certain that Paul here promises final salvation even to those laborers who present work of poor quality at the final judgment.

In view of the meaning of the rest of vv. 13-15, the final phrase ὡς διὰ πυρός cannot refer to a purification¹⁷⁷ or a temporary punishment. Rather, the phrase pictures the unexpected and narrow escape of those whose works will not stand up to the fiery test.¹⁷⁸ The διό, therefore,

¹⁶⁹ See Euripides *Ion*, lines 440-41, where it is used to refer to divine punishment. In Josephus *Antiquities* 15:16 it refers to a death sentence. See also Lysias 31.26.

¹⁷⁰ Matt 16:26=Mark 8:36=Luke 9:25.

¹⁷¹ Exod 21:22; Deut 22:19; 1 Esdras 1:34; Prov 17:26; 22:3; Philo *Spec. Leg.* 3.143. See also 2 Cor 7:9; Phil 3:8; Acts 27:10, 21. Shanor ("Paul as Master Builder") refers to a fourth century B.C.E. temple-building inscription in which ζημιούv is used often in the sense of a fine imposed on contractors for work of poor quality.

¹⁷² Volf, *Paul and Perseverance*, 263.

¹⁷³ Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 192.

¹⁷⁴ So Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment in Paul," 105-106. Chrysostom (Homily 9 on 1 Cor 3:12-15) attempted to avoid doctrinal difficulty and to emphasize the threat of this passage by interpreting σωθήσεται as being kept alive in order to experience further torments.

¹⁷⁵ Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 65; Gnllka, *Fegfeuer*, 129; Pesch, "Der Sonderlohn für die Verkündiger des Evangeliums," 200; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 89; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 77.

¹⁷⁶ When Paul wants to speak of a mundane rescue he uses ῥύεσθαι (Rom 15:31; 2 Thess 3:2).

¹⁷⁷ Michl ("Gerichtsfeuer und Purgatorium," 399) suggests that the image does shift at the end of v. 15 to mean that the person himself, not just the work, must pass through a purifying or testing fire.

¹⁷⁸ So Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 193; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 83; Gnllka, *Fegfeuer*, 129; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 89; Lang, "πῦρ," 944.

is not to be taken as instrumental but as local¹⁷⁹—the salvation is as if the person has narrowly escaped by running out through the walls of the burning building. The image of narrowly escaping as if through fire was well-known in antiquity.¹⁸⁰ In *Sib. Or.* 2.252-54 all people at the final judgment must pass through a blazing river, some coming through safely to be saved, others to be destroyed. In 1 Cor 3:15 Paul again underscores the unity of all who labor for the Lord by affirming their common salvation; but the diversity of the quality of their labor means that some escape condemnation more narrowly than others.

I noted above in Chapter Two that there are close verbal resemblances between 1 Cor 3:13-15 and *T. Abr.* 13:11-13, which I believe are best explained by the activity of Christian scribes who reworked the text of the *Testament of Abraham* under the influence of their familiarity with 1 Cor 3. In spite of the similarity in language, there are fundamental differences between the two texts. *T. Abr.* 13 is part of a larger judgment scene, whereas Paul in 1 Cor 3 does not give a full eschatological scenario. In *T. Abr.* fire is only one of four means of testing, not the sole means as in Paul. In *T. Abr.* the agency of angels is involved. Most importantly, in *T. Abr.* the testing of works is the criterion for salvation or eternal condemnation, whereas in Paul it is the basis only for the receipt or loss of a reward. What both texts have in common is a strong emphasis on individual responsibility for works and on judgment as the revealing and testing of those works. I suggest that this common interest explains much of the similarity in imagery between the two basically unrelated documents. Since the imagery was already somewhat similar, it was an easy matter for later scribes to bring the text of *T. Abr.* 13 into closer verbal alignment with 1 Cor 3.

As I pointed out above in Chapter One, 1 Cor 3:13-15 has been a crux for the theological interpretation of justification by faith in Paul. The problem centers in two questions. In what way are works a basis for God's judgment? On what basis can Paul claim that the person, even if his or her work is burned up, will be saved? A few brief observations can, I think, provide a measure of clarity. On the one hand, behind the

¹⁷⁹ Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 65. The only instrumental use of διὰ πυρός I could find is in 4 Macc 9:9 (eternal punishment by means of fire).

¹⁸⁰ Literal in Isa 43:2-3 (a passage which also uses κατακαίειν and σώζειν); Josephus *Antiquities* 17.264; compare Diodorus Siculus 1.57.7-8. Metaphorical in Ps 65:10-12 (66:10-12MT); Cynic Epistles, *Crates* 6 (Malherbe edition, pp. 56-57): to "proceed toward happiness, even if it is through fire." See also the use of ἐκ πυρός in Amos 4:11; Zech 3:2; Jude 23. In Zech 13:9 people pass through fire for the purpose of purification.

promise of salvation in v. 15 implicitly lies Paul's whole understanding of the salvific work of God in Christ.¹⁸¹ Paul surely sees no contradiction between what he says in 1 Cor 3:13-15 and his teaching on the centrality of faith. On the other hand, the purpose of Paul in 1 Cor 3:13-15 (and in the related judgment statements in 3:8 and 4:5) is not to address the same concerns as, say, Rom 1-8 or Galatians. More specifically, Paul's teachings on faith, justification, and salvation or condemnation in God's final judgment concentrate on the corporate identity and destiny of those who believe in Christ. In 1 Cor 3:13-15, however, Paul's rhetorical strategy calls for him to focus on the other side—the judgment of individuals as a divine recognition of their diversity in effort and quality of labor.¹⁸² This emphasis leads Paul to speak of a judgment on the basis of works, but only for determining each person's reward within the realm of salvation.¹⁸³ The idea of varying eschatological rewards is not unknown in Jewish and other early Christian writings.¹⁸⁴ Further, as I demonstrated in Chapter Three, the Corinthians' familiarity with the judgment language of Greco-Roman tradition would predispose them to understand and accept such an emphasis.

We can now make some concluding points about the function of the judgment language in 1 Cor 3:10-15. In these verses Paul deals not only with himself and Apollos but also with all leaders in the church and by implication with all Christians who labor in the Lord's service. Paul does not speak about a special judgment of apostles and teachers, nor is he raising a polemical threat against any particular party or teaching. The judgment imagery is somewhat inconsistent, but the function is consistent and clear. Both workers and congregation are to view themselves in the light of God's final judgment. This judgment will recognize, reveal, test, and reward their individual diversity. At the same time their fundamental unity lies in their equal responsibility before the

¹⁸¹ Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 77; Burgess, "Rewards, But in a Very Different Sense," 100 and 104; Reumann, "Righteousness" in the New Testament, 49.

¹⁸² Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus*, 41.

¹⁸³ So Teichmann, *Die paulinischen Vorstellungen von Auferstehung und Gericht*, 81; Kühl, *Rechtfertigung auf Grund Glaubens und Gericht nach den Werken bei Paulus*, 27-28; Braun, *Gerichtsgedanke und Rechtfertigungslehre bei Paulus*, 52-53; Filson, *St. Paul's Conception of Recompense*, 91-92, 105-108; Didier, *Désintéressement du Chrétien*, 47-49; Devor, "The Concept of Judgment in the Epistles of Paul," 428-32; Stendahl, "Justification and Last Judgment," 6. Mattern (*Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus*, 109-11 and 176-78) is the most ardent supporter of this view, but she runs into problems when she attempts to find a systematic principle of a two-level judgment in Paul.

¹⁸⁴ For Jewish texts see above in Chap. Two. In the NT see Eph 6:8; Matt 5:12, 19; 10:41-42; Heb 10:35; compare Mark 12:40=Luke 20:47.

God who reveals their works and rewards each person appropriately, the God who also assures final salvation.¹⁸⁵ Paul places great stress on the final revealing of the work of each person in order to remind the spiritually over-zealous and competitive Corinthians that only at God's judgment can works be given their full due.¹⁸⁶

The Judgment of those who harm God's Temple (3:16-17)

The judgment statement in 1 Cor 3:17a is the climax of the increasingly sharper series reaching from 3:8b to 3:14-15 to 3:17a. This threat in v. 17a is enclosed within and warranted by the image of the church as God's holy temple. This image also comes as the high point of the series of planting (vv. 5-9), building (vv. 10-15) and now temple. That vv. 16-17 form a distinct rhetorical unit¹⁸⁷ is signalled not only by the new image of the temple but also by the direct address to the readers in οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι. . . ἔστε. In good rhetorical style Paul prepares his readers for his punch line by reminding them of what they already know about themselves.¹⁸⁸

These two verses are tied together by ναὸς θεοῦ ἔστε at the beginning and οἵτινες ἔστε ἑμῆς at the end, since the antecedent of οἵτινες is the collective ναὸς.¹⁸⁹ They are collectively the temple of God, since (taking the καὶ of v. 16 as explicative¹⁹⁰) God's spirit dwells among them. The words ἐν ἡμῖν here refer to the corporate presence of the Spirit, not the Spirit's dwelling in each individual's body, as in 1 Cor 6:19.¹⁹¹ The judgment statement in v. 17a is grounded in the character of the church as a temple of God, and then v. 17b gives a further reason (γὰρ) for the inviolability of God's temple—it is holy. As a ground for the unity of the church the image of temple and Spirit is equivalent to

¹⁸⁵ Vielhauer, *Oikodome*, 83; Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus*, 41.

¹⁸⁶ Fiore, "The Function of Personal Example," 317-18; Didier, *Désintéressement du Chrétien*, 51; Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 174.

¹⁸⁷ Weiss (*Der erste Korintherbrief*, 85) thought vv. 16-17 to be a gloss because of the form and the sharper tone than the rest of chap. 3. Héring (*First Corinthians*, 24) is inclined to agree. Mattern (*Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus*, 169 note 528) calls v. 17a an interpolation. None of these suggestions has won much support.

¹⁸⁸ On the use of οὐκ οἶδατε see Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 84; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 77. See Epictetus *Diss.* 1.4.16; 1.12.12; 2.5.26; 2.8.12 (all singular). In Paul the phrase is always in the plural: Rom 6:16; 1 Cor 5:6; 6:2-3, 9, 15-16, 19; 9:13, 24. See John 19:10 and James 4:4.

¹⁸⁹ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 92; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 78.

¹⁹⁰ R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament* (Oxford: University Press, 1969), 101.

¹⁹¹ Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 85.

v. 11, where the unity is based upon Christ. In view of the Corinthian zeal for spiritual gifts this is a striking appeal to the Spirit as a unifying agent, an emphasis which Paul brings up again in 1 Cor 12:3-13. The image of temple and indwelling Spirit is used quite differently by Paul in 1 Cor 6:19.¹⁹²

Enclosed within and grounded upon the designation of the church as the holy temple of God is the judgment statement, "If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him." The form of this sentence—conditional clause beginning with εἰ τις and chiastic arrangement of the protasis and apodosis with the same verb in each clause so as to make the human guilt and divine judgment correspond—has been identified by Ernst Käsemann as a "sentence of holy law."¹⁹³ 1 Cor 3:17a is in fact his primary example of this form.¹⁹⁴

We need to distinguish two aspects of Käsemann's thesis. First is his contention that such sentences are the remnants of the earliest community's eschatological fervor; such prophetic pronouncements anticipated God's direct judgment and made church legal procedures and disciplinary actions unnecessary. Second is his view that such sentences functioned to remove judgments about present activity in the church to the future judgment of God.¹⁹⁵ On the first aspect of the thesis, Käsemann has been, in my opinion, decisively refuted by Klaus Berger. Berger demonstrates that this equivalent recompense form has a broader background than Käsemann admitted and is not necessarily connected to direct divine agency or to eschatological judgment.¹⁹⁶ These sentences as a group cannot be traced to the activity of Christian eschatological prophets. In the second aspect of his thesis, however, Käsemann is more helpful. At least in 1 Cor 3:17a the statement has a double function. It is a threat to those whose work could lead to the destruction of the church's unity. It is also a reminder to the church that, though it may be unclear in the present whose work destroys the church, the disclosure and punishment of such destructive work will not escape God's final judgment. The church need not take such judgment into its own hands in the present time.

¹⁹² On these passages see further Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1984), 363; Bertil Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* (Cambridge: University Press, 1965).

¹⁹³ Käsemann, "Sentences of Holy Law," 67 and 78.

¹⁹⁴ 1 Cor 14:38; 16:22; Gal 1:9; Rom 2:12; 2 Cor 9:6 are other examples of the form in Paul. In the rest of the NT see Rev 22:18-19; Mark 4:24; 8:38=Luke 9:26; Matt 5:19; 6:14-15; 10:32-33.

¹⁹⁵ Käsemann, "Sentences of Holy Law," 68 and 78.

¹⁹⁶ Klaus Berger, "Zu den sogenannten Sätzen heiligen Rechts," *NTS* 17 (1970-71), 10-40.

Paul uses the εἰ τις form in 3:17a as well as in 3:12 and 14-15 in order to warn without making any specific accusation. There is no reason for the Corinthian readers to think that he is threatening Apollos or any particular party.¹⁹⁷ Paul intends to raise the real possibility that the Corinthian dissensions could undo the church's unity. The *ius talionis* form leaves no doubt that anyone responsible for such destruction will be condemned at the final judgment.¹⁹⁸ Paul is adding a proviso to the σωθήσεται of v. 15. Although even the purveyors of inferior work will be saved, Christians who actually destroy God's church have no such guarantee.¹⁹⁹ In vv. 5-9 and 10-15 Paul invites his readers to work faithfully themselves and adopt a "wait and see" attitude about the work of others, trusting in God to provide adequate recognition at the final day. In vv. 16-17, however, Paul threatens his readers with the worst possible scenario; God will not tolerate those who destroy his holy work. Only in 3:16-17 within 1 Cor 1-4 does Paul call upon judgment as a pure threat in order to safeguard the unity of the church.

God's Judgment of the Wise (3:18-23)

At first glance there seems to be little connection between 3:18-23 and its context in 3:5-4:5. The connections with 1:18-2:16, on the other hand, are obvious. I suggest that we see 3:18-23 as the first of two climactic recapitulations that round off the major rhetorical unit of 3:5-4:5. The section of 3:18-23 is a peroration which rehearses and sharpens the themes of the first major rhetorical unit (1:18-2:16) but which is by no means without ties to 3:5-17 and 4:1-5.²⁰⁰ Here in 3:18-23 Paul explicitly connects the wisdom theme with crucial elements of the Corinthian problem: boasting in people and factional allegiance to teachers. For this reason 3:18-23 is a key to understanding the whole rhetorical strategy of 1:10-4:21.²⁰¹ As we shall see, judgment language has an important role to play also in 3:18-23.

¹⁹⁷ The same is true in 1 Cor 14:38 and 16:22. Gal 1:9 is a different matter. Paul can anticipate the final judgment of definite opponents: Rom 3:8; 2 Cor 11:15; Gal 5:10; Phil 3:19. Chrysostom (Homily 9 on 1 Cor 3:12-15) thinks that Paul is in 3:17 already beginning to threaten the man of chap. 5. Similarly Héring, *First Corinthians*, 24.

¹⁹⁸ The future form φθερεῖ is read by a majority of witnesses. The present tense, with mostly Western support, seems to have been assimilated to the verb form in the protasis. For a similar use of διαφθερεῖν see Rev 11:18; also Jer 13:9.

¹⁹⁹ Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 131. Heiligenthal (*Werke als Zeichen*, 215-16) suggests that this is Paul's equivalent to the sin against the Holy Spirit in Mark 3:28-30.

²⁰⁰ Davis, *Wisdom and Spirit*, 136-37.

²⁰¹ Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 7; Bünker, *Briefformular*, 57.

Paul opens the unit with a paradoxical statement in v. 18 which is reminiscent of his style of argument in 1:18-31. Verse 19a states the basis for Paul's bold assertion (γάρ), and this in turn is backed up by two Scriptural quotations in vv. 19b-20 (introduced by another γάρ), a tactic again reminiscent of 1:18-2:16. The climax of the unit comes in v. 21a, "So let no one boast in people." The use of ὥστε signals that this imperative admonition is founded on vv. 18-20. Verses 21b-23 provide further grounding for the imperative of v. 21a (again introduced by γάρ), and the whole unit is brought to a rhetorical and theological high point in v. 23.

Paul in the opening words of v. 18 shifts the focus from the corporate to a personal level: "Let no one deceive himself. If any one among you thinks that he is wise in this age. . . ." Paul turns from the social relationships among teachers and people—planting, building, destroying—to the underlying individual attitudes. The self-perception (δοκεῖ) of being wise Paul judges as self-deception (ἐαυτὸν ἐξαπατᾶν). Such a critique of the readers' self-regard is a strategy used by Paul elsewhere in 1 Corinthians (8:2; 10:12; 11:16; 14:37).²⁰² This state of mind is designated by Paul in the OT quotations in vv. 19-20 as πανουργία and διαλογισμοί, which are "futile" (μάταιοι). It is this state of mind which results in the social behavior of boasting about people.

Paul's critique is directed against an opinion of oneself as a wise person (σοφός). Such an attitude is the object of Paul's discussion throughout 1:18-2:16 and here in 3:18-23 comes in for its last explicit treatment. This is a wisdom which shows itself in eloquence of speech (1:17, 20; 2:1, 4, 13);²⁰³ cannot by itself know God (1:21); regards the preaching of the cross as foolishness (1:18-19, 23); is associated with high social status (1:26); is sought by Greeks (1:22); and belongs in the sphere of human traits (1:26; 2:5) and human rulers (2:6). Against this wisdom Paul sets a wisdom of a wholly different source and nature (1:21, 24, 25, 30; 2:6, 7).

How has the Corinthian high regard for wisdom helped to create the factional strife in Corinth? The background and contours of the Corinthian

²⁰² See also Gal 6:3, where φρεναπατᾶ ἐαυτὸν parallels "Let no one deceive himself" in 1 Cor 3:18. Also Phil 3:4 and James 1:26. Commentators often point to the use of μὴ ἐξαπατάσθε in Epictetus *Diss.* 2.22.15 as a parallel (e.g., Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 79), but in Epictetus this is merely an apostrophe which might be paraphrased, "don't hold a contrary opinion," whereas Paul uses the verb to speak of a real self-deception about one's spiritual state. Closer parallels to Epictetus can be found in the phrase μὴ πλανᾶσθε in 1 Cor 6:9; 15:33; Gal 6:7. On self-deception see also Rev 3:17.

²⁰³ On eloquence as one of the Corinthian criteria for wisdom see Horsley, "Wisdom of Word and Words of Wisdom in Corinth," 224 and 231.

views on wisdom have been the subject of endless debate,²⁰⁴ but in recent years a growing number of scholars has recognized that the intellectual underpinnings for such an attitude are to be found in a certain stream of hellenistic thought. This stream can be seen both in Stoic views of the unique freedom of the philosopher-sage and in hellenistic Jewish descriptions of the ideal person.²⁰⁵ One essential point is agreed upon by most investigators: the pursuit of wisdom among the Corinthians resulted in a tendency to divide people into two classes. This led to zealous individual striving for status as a spiritually wise person and condescension over against those who had not attained such wisdom.²⁰⁶ One remaining question is whether this attitude about wisdom was founded upon a Christology and/or eschatology which Paul sees as the deepest root of the problem.²⁰⁷ In my opinion, it has been adequately demonstrated that similar attitudes toward the attainment of status and freedom through wisdom can be found in common hellenistic ideals. Therefore, we need posit no particular Christological or eschatological views as the foundation for such an attitude about wisdom.

More specifically, the phrase "all things are yours," which occurs both at the beginning and end of the list in vv. 21b-22, is a reflection of the Corinthian goal of wisdom as the road to freedom, perfection, and power. Such ownership of all things is a claim frequently made about the person who has attained wisdom, among Stoic philosophers²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ Winter, *Pneumatiker und Psychiker*, overviews past scholarly opinion: pagan influence (pp. 3-20), Gnostic influence (pp. 21-42); OT-Jewish interpretation (pp. 42-51); hellenistic Judaism (pp. 51-56).

²⁰⁵ On the Cynic-Stoic connection see Robert M. Grant, "The Wisdom of the Corinthians," *The Joy of Study: Papers on New Testament and Related Subjects Presented to Honor Frederick Clifton Grant* (ed. Sherman E. Johnson; New York: MacMillan, 1951), 51-52 (although he holds the unlikely view that Stoic ideas were mediated to the Corinthians from the Essenes through Apollos [pp. 54-55]). Champions of a background in hellenistic Judaism include: Pearson, "Hellenistic-Jewish Wisdom Speculation and Paul," 43-66; *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians, passim*; Horsley, "'How Can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?'," 212-13; Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 79; Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16" (this is a radical change of mind for Wilckens from his earlier *Weisheit und Torheit*, where he saw the problem as a faulty Christology and eschatology influenced by Gnosticism).

²⁰⁶ Horsley, "'How can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?'," 216-23; "PNEUMATIKOS vs. PSYCHIKOS," 278 and 287.

²⁰⁷ Jacques Dupont ("Gnosis." *La connaissance religieuse dans les épîtres de Saint Paul* [Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts; Paris: J. Gabalda, 1949], 301-305) says that 1 Cor 3:21-22 shows that the Corinthians have transposed the future eschatological blessings to the level of hellenistic philosophy.

²⁰⁸ Diogenes Laertius 6.37 and 72 (Diogenes); 7.125 (Zeno); Seneca *Ep. Mor.* 109.1; *De Benef.* 7.2.5; 7.3.2-3; 7.4.1; 7.8.1; 7.10.6; Cicero *De Finibus* 3.22.75; 4.27.74; see also Von Arnim, *SVF*, vol. 3, #589. On this point see especially Herbert Braun, "Exegetische Randglossen zum I. Korintherbrief," in *Gesammelte Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1967), 182.

as well as in the Wisdom of Solomon (7:11; 8:5, 10, 14, 18) and Philo.²⁰⁹ Further, the terms which Paul uses in 4:8—filled, rich, ruling—are also used in these same sources to describe the wise person (see below on 4:8).

Paul sees that the attitude in which the attainment of wisdom is so highly desired leads to a sense of superiority, perfection, power, and freedom over against others in the group; this is what he calls boasting in people (3:21a).²¹⁰ The phrase ἐν ἀνθρώποις means not “among people” or “in the eyes of people” but rather denotes the object of the boasting: “because of people” or “about people.”²¹¹ One example of the content of such boasting is the sloganeering of 1:12 and 3:4; another example is an individual being puffed up in favor of one at the expense of another (4:6); another example is the act of judging one another in the church (4:3-5). Such promoting of one person at the expense of another Paul ties to the deeper boastful attitude that holds all things to be in one’s reach (4:7) and ultimately to an arrogance which affects one’s faith in God (1:29 and 31; see 5:6).²¹²

Consequently, Paul’s rhetorical strategy in 1:10-4:21 has two complementary aspects. On the one hand, he deals directly with the social manifestations of the problem in the light of God’s future judgment (in 3:5-17 and 4:1-5). On the other hand, he deals with the underlying problem of individual spiritual and intellectual competitiveness by means of a fundamental discussion of the relationship of human wisdom with God (in 1:18-2:16 and 3:18-23).²¹³ In what follows I hope to show how Paul’s four sorts of arguments in 3:18-23 both recapitulate the themes of 1:18-2:16²¹⁴ and complement his judgment language in 3:5-17 and 4:1-5.

First, one of the basic themes of 1:10-4:21 is summarized in 3:19a: “For the wisdom of this world is folly with God.” The consequence is

²⁰⁹ *Plant.* 69; *Omn. Prob. Lib.* 41 and 131; *Vit. Mos.* 1.156-57. See later reflections of the idea in the *Gospel of Philip* 76,17-22 and 77, 20-30.

²¹⁰ Baird, “One Against the Other,” 130. On Stoic boasting see Plutarch *On Stoic Self-Contradiction* 1038C.

²¹¹ Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 195; BDF #196; Rudolf Bultmann, “κουχάμοι, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 3, 648-49 note 35. On the options see Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 79-80. Parallels to the use of ἐν in 1 Cor 3:21a are found in Rom 2:17; 5:3; 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:15, 17; 12:9; Gal 6:13. See Jer 9:22-23 and 1 Kgdms 2:10. But in Rom 15:17, 1 Cor 15:31, and Phil 1:26 the ἐν expresses a different idea.

²¹² Peter Lampe, “Theological Wisdom and the ‘Word About the Cross’: The Rhetorical Scheme in I Corinthians 1-4,” *Int* 44 (1990), 118.

²¹³ Paul W. Gooch, *Partial Knowledge: Philosophical Studies in Paul* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 20, 26.

²¹⁴ The one major exception is that in 3:18-23 Paul makes no use of Christology and the cross.

stated in v. 18: to be truly wise before God one cannot seek the wisdom which makes an impression on the world. Rather, the true wisdom of God is hidden under what appears to be foolishness (2:6-7).²¹⁵ One must become, to the judgment of the world, a fool (μωρός). This foolish wisdom is found above all in the preaching of the cross of Christ (1:17-18, 21, 23; 2:1-2). All depends on which realm one looks to for evaluation. If one seeks to appear wise by the standards of this age—the culture in which the Corinthians live out their daily lives—, then God's verdict will be: you are foolish and on the way to destruction (1:18, 20, 25; compare Rom 1:22). If one seeks to appear wise before God, then one will have to accept the verdict of the surrounding culture: foolishness (1:18, 21, 23, 27; 2:14; 4:9-10, 13). There is a fundamental dichotomy between standing before the tribunal of this world²¹⁶ and standing before God.²¹⁷ Although in 3:18-23 the reference is to present judgment, the point is basically the same as in the references to future judgment in 3:5-17 and 4:1-5. The Corinthians are to turn away from evaluating each other by standards that belong to this age. Instead, they are to govern their behavior and evaluate one another as if standing before God.

Second, in 3:19b-20 Paul uses Scriptural quotations to demonstrate that human wisdom stands under God's judgment. This brings to its high point a theme begun in 1:19. As Paul quotes them each of these OT texts announces that God judges the wise: Isa 29:14 in 1 Cor 1:19 (ἀπολῶ and ἄθετήσω)²¹⁸; Job 5:12-13 in 1 Cor 3:19b

²¹⁵ Schottroff, *Der Glaubende und die feindliche Welt*, 224-27.

²¹⁶ For Paul "this age" (ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος; Rom 12:2; 1 Cor 1:20; 2:6, 8; 3:18; 2 Cor 4:4; Gal 1:4; Eph 1:21) is equivalent to "this world" (1 Cor 3:19; 5:10; 7:31; Eph 2:2). So Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 43; Hermann Sasse, "αἰὼν, αἰώνιος," *TDNT* 1, 203. See also "the present time" (Rom 3:26; 8:18; 11:5; 2 Cor 8:14) and κατὰ σὰρκά in 1 Cor 1:26. This is the world/age which is subject to God's judgment (1 Cor 1:20, 21, 27-28; 2:12; 4:9, 13; 6:2; 7:33-34; 11:32). In 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 Paul does not have in mind with "this age/world" primarily a temporal contrast to the age/world to come (in fact, this contrast never occurs in the undisputed letters, only in Eph 1:21; see also perhaps Rom 8:18), but rather the ethical quality of the mundane realm in contrast to the divine realm. See French L. Arrington, *Paul's Aeon Theology in 1 Corinthians* (Washington: University Press of America, 1977), 117-18.

²¹⁷ παρὰ τῷ θεῷ. This phrase is used elsewhere to signify the position one takes before God the judge (Rom 2:11, 13; Gal 3:11; Eph 6:9; 2 Thess 1:6; James 1:27; 1 Pet 2:4, 20; 2 Pet 2:11; Matt 6:1; Luke 1:30; 2:52. It can be used of human judgment (Acts 26:8; Luke 2:52) and of self-judgment (Rom 11:25; 12:16). Compare ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ in 1 Cor 1:29.

²¹⁸ Paul has strengthened the judgment character of the quotation by substituting ἄθετήσω for the LXX κρύψω (which accurately translates the MT), perhaps drawing on Ps 32:10LXX (ἄθετεῖ βουλὰς ἀρχόντων).

(δρασσόμενος)²¹⁹; and Ps 93:11 (94:11 MT) in 1 Cor 3:20 (γινώσκει . . . μάταιοι).²²⁰ The midrashic exposition in 1:18-31 develops the theme of divine opposition to the pretensions of human wisdom (see especially vv. 20b, 25, 27, 28).²²¹ These OT citations are not isolated texts plucked out arbitrarily by Paul. They are part of a rich OT and Jewish tradition that asserts God's sovereignty as creator over human pretensions.²²² So Paul is on solid ground in invoking the judgment of God as a consistent motif throughout 1 Cor 1:10-4:21.

A third thread in 3:18-20 which also runs through 1:10-4:21 is the assertion that human knowledge is limited. One must acknowledge that before God he or she is a fool (3:18) and that human reasonings are futile (3:20). The wisdom of the world cannot by itself come to know God's wisdom, which can only be received as God's plan for salvation revealed in Christ (1:21). In 2:6-16 Paul delves more deeply into this revelation and its consequences for human knowledge. When Paul in 2:6a sets out the thesis of this section, "we speak wisdom among the mature," he is not speaking of an esoteric higher wisdom for a special elite. He is still referring to Christ crucified as the content of God's wisdom (1:24, 30; 2:2, 8).²²³ As the parallel with 2:13 shows, the main burden of 2:6-16 is to show how this wisdom of God is able to be received by the human intellect. In other words, Paul is setting up the distinction between the wisdom of this age and the wisdom of God in epistemological terms.

This "wisdom among the mature" is something which cannot be

²¹⁹ Paul's version is quite different from the LXX ὁ καταλαμβάνων σοφὸς ἐν τῇ φρονήσει, although Paul's version reflects the Hebrew equally as well as does the LXX. On Paul's use of Job see E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), 14 and 144; Hans Vollmer, *Die alttestamentlichen Citate bei Paulus* (Freiburg/Leipzig: Mohr [Siebeck], 1895), 22-24.

²²⁰ Paul has apparently substituted σοφῶν for ἑνθρώπων, which is found in the LXX.

²²¹ Wuellner, "Haggadic Homily Genre in I Corinthians 1-3," 202-204.

²²² God alone is wise and the source of wisdom (Dan 2:20; Sir 1:8; Wis 9:9; Baruch 3:9, 14, 23); God's wisdom is impenetrable to humans (Deut 29:29; Job 28:12-28; Prov 25:2; 4 Ezra 4); God opposes the wisdom of counselors (Isa 19:11-12; 33:18; 44:25; Job 12:17); God exalts the lowly and humbles the proud (1 Kgdms 2:7-10; 2 Baruch 70:3-5; compare James 2:5; Luke 1:51-53; Matt 11:25); God judges all human boastfulness, pride, and arrogance (Jer 9:22-23, which Paul quotes in 1 Cor 1:29 and 31; Ps 93 [94MT]: 1-11, part of which Paul quotes in 1 Cor 3:20; 1 Kgdms 2:3; Lev 26:19; Ps 30:24 [31:23MT]; 74 [75MT]:5-8; 88:11 [89:10MT]; Isa 1:24-25; 2:11-22; 3:18; 2 Macc 7:35-36; *Pss. Sol.* 2:31).

²²³ Schnackenburg, "Christian Adulthood," 356; Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 80-82; Pearson, "Hellenistic-Jewish Wisdom Speculation and Paul," 51; Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16," 513-14.

known by those who belong to the world--this age and its rulers (vv. 6 and 8).²²⁴ These people are ψυχικός and regard God's wisdom as foolishness (2:14; see 1:21).²²⁵ To them God's wisdom is hidden (2:7-8 and the quotation in v. 9).²²⁶ The central statement of the whole section comes in 2:10a, with its emphatic ἡμῖν: God has revealed his wisdom to us.²²⁷ The contrast between the human spirit and the divine Spirit as the agent of revelation in vv. 10b-12 is essentially the same as that between divine wisdom and human wisdom. What is revealed by God is not some special esoteric knowledge but simply salvation.²²⁸ Accordingly, the first person plural form used throughout 2:6-16 and the term πνευματικός refer to all Christians.²²⁹ In the climactic v. 16, the expected answer to the Biblical question is negative—no one can know the Lord's mind. However, by God's revelation through the Spirit "we"—as opposed to the worldly rulers, the outsiders, the ψυχικοί—do have the mind of Christ, that is, the saving knowledge of God's purpose in the crucified Christ.

This discussion of revelation leads back to the issue of speaking (2:13), which was introduced in 1:17-18 and exemplified in 2:1-5, and which introduced this section in 2:6a. Christians speak with words learned through God's revelation, not with words learned by means of human wisdom (2:13), for spiritual matters (πνευματικά)²³⁰ can only be explained (συγκρίνοντες) to spiritual people (πνευματικοί).²³¹ That is, the Spirit's revelation can be both spoken and received only by those who are willing to look to the Spirit of God rather than to the spirit of worldly wisdom as the source of the knowledge of salvation.²³² This point is confirmed by v. 14, where it is said that these things of the

²²⁴ Many commentators take ἄρχοντες to refer to supernatural powers, but it makes more sense in the context to see them as humans who cannot recognize God's wisdom. Of the voluminous literature on the matter see especially Wilckens ("Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16," 508); he changes his position from his earlier opinion in *Weisheit und Torheit*, 64.

²²⁵ ψυχικός refers not to a class of Christians inferior to the πνευματικοί but rather to all who have not accepted God's revelation; this view finds support in 1 Cor 15:44 and 46 and also in James 3:13-18 and Jude 19. Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, 51.

²²⁶ Compare 2 Cor 4:3, where the Gospel is said to be hidden. See Schottroff, *Der Glaubende und die feindliche Welt*, 224-27.

²²⁷ Ibid. 204-211.

²²⁸ Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16," 511.

²²⁹ Some want to see the first person plurals referring only to Paul himself (so Pearson, "Hellenistic-Jewish Wisdom Speculation and Paul," 51). But especially in vv. 7b, 10, 12 it is clear that all Christians are meant. So Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.6-16," 511; Schnackenburg, "Christian Adulthood," 358; Winter, *Pneumatiker und Psychiker*, 214.

²³⁰ Taking πνευματικά to be parallel with τὰ χαρισθέντα in v. 12.

²³¹ So this troublesome phrase is understood by Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor. 2.1-16," 511; Friedrich Büchsel, "κρίνω, κτλ.," *TDNT* 3, 953-54; BAGD, 774.

²³² Baumann, *Mitte und Norm des Christlichen*, 248-49.

Spirit can only be investigated (ἀνακρίνεται), and thus received, by means of the Spirit.²³³

Verse 15a, "The spiritual person judges all things," could well be a Corinthian slogan analogous to such claims as "all things are ours" (3:21b) or "all things are lawful for me" (6:12).²³⁴ In any case, the statement is a valid inference from Paul's preceding exposition and is accepted by Paul as a legitimate expression concerning the free realm of inquiry open to the spiritual person. The use of ἀνακρίνειν with the neuter object πάντα refers to intellectual examination and discernment, not judicial probing. Verse 15a is parallel to v. 10b, "The Spirit searches all things." The reference is in both cases to the things revealed by God (v. 12b).

Verse 15b expresses the converse of v. 15a. The RSV is wrong to make this into a rule, "is to be judged by no one." It is simply a statement of fact: the spiritual person is subject to examination by no one except the Lord.²³⁵ This principle is spelled out more explicitly with reference to the Corinthian situation in 4:3-5. One should not suppose, however, that in 2:15b Paul is concerned to defend himself against Corinthian examination of him.²³⁶ Rather, he states here a principle which is explored further in both 3:13 and 4:3-5. Inter-Christian judging is limited both by the inability to look into another's heart²³⁷ and by the Christian servant's ultimate responsibility to the Lord rather than to the community.²³⁸

Thus we see that in 2:6-16 Paul develops a theme which is found throughout 1:10-4:21 and is prominent in 3:18-23—the gulf between human wisdom and God's wisdom. The wisdom of God and the wisdom of the world are completely different ways of knowing. This chasm can be crossed only by God's revelation. This epistemological dichotomy is ultimately confirmed by the judgment of God that condemns the world and reveals the work and hearts of believers.

The fourth basis for the admonition not to boast about people is Paul's powerful rhetorical flourish in 3:21b-23. The two πάντα ὑμῶν phrases enclose a list of the things which they possess. Paul can agree that all things are theirs, because God has through the Spirit revealed

²³³ Martyn, "Epistemology at the Turn of the Ages," 278.

²³⁴ Horsley, "Wisdom of Word and Words of Wisdom," 237. But Horsley thinks that it is a principle rejected by Paul.

²³⁵ In v. 15b ἀνακρίνειν has more of an informal judicial sense.

²³⁶ Some who think that 2:15b is self-defense are Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 67; Murphy-O'Connor, *1 Corinthians*, 21; Robin Scroggs, "Paul: Σοφός and πνευματικός," *NTS* 14 (1967-68), 53.

²³⁷ Dupont, "Gnosis," 325.

²³⁸ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 78.

his wisdom in Christ (2:10 and 15). The names Paul, Apollos, and Cephas, of course, reflect the slogans of 1:12 and 3:4. The implication is that it is precisely their liberty as Christians which puts all such teachers on a single level as servants (see 3:5-9).²³⁹ The final two clauses in v. 23 cap the whole direction of Paul's rhetorical argument from 1:10 to this point.²⁴⁰ The fact that they all together belong to Christ keeps their Christian liberty from pulling them apart in all sorts of individual directions through judging and boasting. Finally, all in Christ's church are dependent on and held accountable to God, from whom they have received all things (1:30 and 4:7) and by whom all their wisdom and work will be judged.²⁴¹

We see in 1 Cor 3:18-23 that Paul sees an integral connection between a high regard for the pursuit of wisdom and the tendency to form factions around and boast about leaders in the church. The factional strife in Corinth has been created, at least in part, by the desire of people to be judged as wise in the eyes of the culture and to judge others in the church by that same worldly standard. Among Paul's many arguments in 1:10-4:21 one theme stands out clearly: God as judge. In 3:18-23 Paul recapitulates much of the argument of 1:18-2:16 from the perspective of God's judgment of human wisdom. In this sense 3:18-23 is thematically consistent with 3:5-17 and 4:1-5, even though there is no explicit emphasis on eschatological judgment.

The Futility of Premature Human Judgments (4:1-5)

With 3:18-23 Paul reaches a rhetorical climax which finally ties together the wisdom theme with the problem of factional strife. In 4:1-5 Paul works up to a second climactic statement which develops more deeply the contrast between human and divine evaluation of Christ's servants, picking this theme up again from 3:5-17.²⁴² The opening οὕτως in 4:1 looks back especially to 3:22-23 and 3:5-9, reaffirming that Christian teachers are servants who depend on Christ and God.²⁴³ In 4:1 Paul

²³⁹ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 95; Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit," 95.

²⁴⁰ Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 10.

²⁴¹ See also 8:6; 11:12; 12:6; 15:28; Rom 11:36.

²⁴² Some commentators see 4:1 as the beginning of a new major section in which Paul becomes more aggressively apologetic; so Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 64. It is better to see a major break between 4:5 and 4:6 (Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God*, 285) and see 4:1-5 as the conclusion of 3:5-4:5.

²⁴³ Some commentators have taken οὕτως to anticipate the ὡς later in v. 1 and have little connection to the preceding; Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 139; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 74; Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 197; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 93; BAGD, 598. Support for this usage can be found in 1 Cor 3:15;

introduces the main point of 4:1-5: who is competent (both in the sense of authority and of ability) to judge a Christian leader? Verse 2 is something of a parenthesis which states the criterion by which a servant is normally judged.²⁴⁴ Verses 3 and 4 return to the question of "who" with a contrast between incompetent judges and the one who is competent—the Lord. With v. 5 Paul draws out the logical conclusion: do not engage in incompetent judgment. This admonition is grounded in a further explication of future divine judgment in v. 5b. The final phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ in v. 5 forms an *inclusio* with v. 1, and it also forges a link to the earlier theological conclusions in 3:9, 16-17, and 23.

This contrast between human and divine evaluation is implied in v. 1, where ἄνθρωπος is an emphatic substitute for τις²⁴⁵ (compare ἀνθρωπίνης in v. 3), and where λογιζέσθω introduces a string of verbs that refer to evaluation.²⁴⁶ Instead of comparing teachers, they are to simply accept their teachers as servants who belong to Christ (ὑπηρέτας Χριστοῦ).²⁴⁷ In 3:5-9 Paul stresses that the servant status means mutual subordination under God. In 4:1-5, however, there is a note of pride and independence at the thought of being accountable only to such a divine master.²⁴⁸ Teachers are also "stewards of the mysteries of God." Paul uses οἰκονομός²⁴⁹ to stress that Christian teachers are responsible and accountable to only one master.²⁵⁰ The genitive after οἰκονόμους is objective; the mysteries of God are the goods entrusted to these stewards. As the parallels in 2:1 and 7 suggest, these are the mysteries of Christ revealed through the preaching of his servants; they

9:26; 2 Cor 9:5; Eph 5:33. None of these, however, are at the beginning of a sentence, let alone of a new rhetorical unit. Rather, οὕτως refers back (so Grosheide, *First Corinthians*, 98; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 99; Fascher, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 142; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 82). Similar usage is in 1 Cor 8:12; Rom 1:15; 6:11; 11:5.

²⁴⁴ Grosheide, *First Corinthians*, 99.

²⁴⁵ Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 74; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 99. Similar uses of ἄνθρωπος are found in 1 Cor 11:28 and Epictetus *Diss.* 3.23.15.

²⁴⁶ ζητεῖται, εἰρεθῇ, and πιστός in v. 2; forms of ἀνακρίνειν in vv. 3-4; σύννοια and δεδικαίωμα in v. 4; κρίνετε, φωτίζει, φανερώσει, and ἔποινος in v. 5.

²⁴⁷ Note the parallel with διάκονος in 3:5; Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, 8; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 99. Paul uses ὑπηρέτης only here.

²⁴⁸ This same note of pride and independence is clear when Epictetus refers to the philosopher as the ὑπηρέτης of Zeus (*Diss.* 3.22.82 and 3.22.95; see also the similar use of οἰκονόμος in 3.22.3).

²⁴⁹ Used by Paul in the metaphorical sense only here. Titus 1:7 does have "God's steward." See also 1 Pet 4:10. Paul uses οἰκονομία once to refer to his task, in 1 Cor 9:17. John Reumann, "'Stewards of God'—Pre-Christian Religious Application of ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΟΣ in Greek," *JBL* 77 (1958), 341-49.

²⁵⁰ Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 76.

are not some special esoteric or apocalyptic wisdom.²⁵¹ By what criterion is a steward evaluated?²⁵² Paul answers in v. 2 with what amounts to a truism in Greco-Roman society—one looks for a steward who will prove to be faithful in carrying out his assigned duties.²⁵³ The verb ἐδρεθῆν implies disclosure and evaluation and anticipates the multiple use of ἀνακρίνειν in vv. 3-4.²⁵⁴ There will be an accounting for Christ's servants, but only by this accepted standard.²⁵⁵

After v. 2 one might expect (especially if Paul's main concern were self-defense, as many commentators assume) that Paul would demonstrate that he is indeed a faithful servant of the Lord. Verse 2, however, proves to be somewhat parenthetical, and Paul in vv. 3-5 turns back to the question of who is competent to judge a Christian servant. In the phrase ἡ ὑπὸ ἀνθρωπίνης ἡμέρας Paul places the Corinthians' judgments emphatically on the human side, in contrast to the Lord's "day" of judgment mentioned earlier in 3:13.²⁵⁶ In 4:3 Paul takes the principle of 2:15b and applies it in a personal way. The spiritual person (any Christian) is legitimately and competently examined by no one, except by the Lord. Therefore, any attempts to put a teacher under such scrutiny can be of little consequence personally.²⁵⁷

Paul describes the Corinthian action toward him, as well as his own self-evaluation and God's evaluation, with the verb ἀνακρίνειν. This suggests here a sort of preliminary investigation leading to the forma-

²⁵¹ So correctly Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 197; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 94; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 83. To be sure, in 2:1 and 7 μυστήριον is singular (plural only in 4:1; 13:2; and 14:2). Gerhard Dautzenberg (*Urchristliche Prophetie: Ihre Erforschung, ihre Voraussetzungen im Judentum und ihre Struktur im ersten Korintherbrief* [BWANT 104; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1975], 152) uses 1 Cor 13:2, 14:2, and 15:51 to suggest that in 4:1 Paul refers to esoteric or prophetic utterance.

²⁵² ὥδε λοιπὸν together signal that a further inference from the previous sentence is to be drawn; BDF #451 (6).

²⁵³ John Reumann, "Oikonomia-terms in Paul in Comparison with Lucan Heilsgeschichte," *NTS* 13 (1966-67), 160.

²⁵⁴ Moses says in Josephus *Antiquities* 4.49: "...for thus should I be proved (ἐδρεθῆην) a faithful minister (ἀγαθός ὑπηρέτης) of thy behests."

²⁵⁵ Paul refers to himself as faithful in 1 Cor 7:25; compare 1 Tim 1:12. He refers to Timothy as faithful in 1 Cor 4:17; compare Eph 6:21; Col 1:7; 4:9. In Acts 16:15 Lydia wants to be judged as faithful to the Lord. Servants are expected to be faithful (Matt 24:45; 25:21, 23; Luke 12:42; 16:10-12; 19:17). See also Rev 2:10, 13. In the LXX see Num 12:7; 1 Kgdms 22:14.

²⁵⁶ Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 76; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 101. See the similar use of ἀνθρώπινος in 2:13. Also Acts 17:25; Job 10:5; 4 Macc 1:16-17; 4:13; Josephus *Jewish War* 6.429.

²⁵⁷ The statement of 2:15a, "The spiritual person judges all things," does not contradict 4:3-4 (or 2:15b). The "all things" of v. 15a refers to the revealed things of God which can be known and examined only by means of the Spirit; "all things" does not refer to people at all. See Schottroff, *Der Glaubende und die feindliche Welt*, 205-206. See my exegesis of 2:15 above under my treatment of 3:18-23.

tion of an opinion about someone.²⁵⁸ Although many commentators think that Paul is referring to Corinthian criticisms of himself,²⁵⁹ it is better to think of scrutiny that could result in either elevation or criticism.²⁶⁰ For Paul in 4:3 is thinking of the sort of process that lies behind the party slogans mentioned in 1:12 and 3:4 and of the boasting about people which he mentions in 3:21a. To be sure, this did involve criticism of Paul by some in the congregation; he responds to this in 9:3.²⁶¹ Yet just as Paul was compared unfavorably with Apollos by some people, so in the opinion of others Paul came out ahead. Quite likely such "examination" in Corinth included a critique of rhetorical skills (1:17; 2:1, 4; 3:2) and competence in "wisdom" in general.

As if to avoid any appearance of special pleading and in order to drive home more deeply his point that nobody except the Lord is competent to examine him, Paul denies that even his own conscience is an adequate judge (vv. 3b-4b).²⁶² The main line of thought runs from v. 3b directly to v. 4c: "I do not even judge myself. . . . It is the Lord who judges me." Verse 4ab, "I am not aware of anything against myself²⁶³, but I am not thereby acquitted," is a parenthesis that serves to clarify v. 3b.²⁶⁴

We have seen above in Chapter Three that in Greek and Roman thought (and in Philo) moral self-awareness and self-examination is largely seen as independent of (or at most exactly corresponding to) any revealing and judgment before a postmortem tribunal. In most Jewish conceptions, however, one's moral self-awareness is subject to confirmation or falsification by the God who knows the hearts of all.²⁶⁵ Paul

²⁵⁸ This word can refer to a formal judicial examination, as in Luke 23:14; Acts 4:9; 12:19; 24:8; 28:18; compare Acts 25:26. It has a non-human object in Acts 17:11 (Scripture) and 1 Cor 2:14-15a (things of the Spirit). Other uses in 1 Corinthians refer to non-judicial scrutiny of other Christians (2:15b; 4:3; 9:30, of oneself (4:3; 10:25 and 27), and of outsiders (14:24). In 1 Cor 4:4 it refers to examination by the Lord. The fact that the word is used so frequently in 1 Corinthians (along with other words on the root κριτν-) but never elsewhere in Paul suggests that such examining, judging, comparing, and forming opinions is seen by Paul as a characteristic of the situation in Corinth.

²⁵⁹ Gerd Theissen, *Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 59; Dahl, "Paul and the Church at Corinth," 48-49.

²⁶⁰ Fascher, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 143.

²⁶¹ Even in chap. 9 Paul's "self-defense" is not his main interest but is part of a larger strategy.

²⁶² On this passage see especially Eckstein, *Der Begriff Syneidesis bei Paulus*, 199-213.

²⁶³ The use of σύνιδια with a reflexive is unique in the NT but not unknown elsewhere. In the Greek OT the construction occurs only in Job 27:6, where Job is maintaining his innocence. Elsewhere it is found in Plato *Republic* 331A; *Apology* 21B; Xenophon *Apology* 24; Isocrates *Nicocles or the Cyprians* 59; Pseudo-Isocrates *Demonicus* 16; Polybius *Histories* 1.84.10-11; Epictetus *Diss.* 3.23.15.

²⁶⁴ The γάρ of v. 4a is a rather loose connection; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 97.

²⁶⁵ Eckstein, *Der Begriff Syneidesis*, 107 and 213.

is drawing upon this Jewish point of view in 1 Cor 4:4-5 and is imagining his stance before God at the final judgment. He is confident that he has been faithful in carrying out his commission (see 2 Cor 1:12).²⁶⁶ Nevertheless, this confidence is no more valid in the light of God's judgment than are the Corinthian opinions about their teachers.²⁶⁷ With δεικνύμενοι Paul is thinking of the final judgment and the salvation won by Christ.²⁶⁸ Neither the Corinthian scrutiny nor his own self-scrutiny means anything to Paul. The only tribunal that matters is that of the Lord who is his master (v. 4c; see Rom 14:4).

In 4:5 Paul reaches the point he has been working up to in vv. 1-4 (ὥστε) and also comes to the rhetorical climax of all of 3:5-4:5. The Corinthians are to stop passing judgment on one another,²⁶⁹ especially on their teachers such as Paul and Apollos. Κρίνειν refers to the ultimate result of the activity of ἀνακρίνειν in the congregation, acts of judgment which make invidious comparisons and prefer one over another. People are being put to the test of opinion to determine their relative status within the congregation (1:12; 3:3-4; 4:3, 6). Such partisanship will come to an end only if the Corinthians can see that such acts of judgment illegitimately anticipate the only opinion that really matters to the Christian—that of the Lord. The fact of a higher court of opinion makes the trial among peers into nothing but a kangaroo court. The neuter τι, rather than the masculine τινά, gives this statement the character of a general principle. Yet Paul clearly has only certain kinds of judgments in mind here. Elsewhere in 1 Corinthians he recognizes the legitimate need for other sorts of judgments in the community.²⁷⁰

As in 3:8b, 13-15, and 17, Paul in 4:5 points his readers to the future judgment of God as the counterpoint to their present divisive judgments. Only the awaited coming of Christ the Lord is the proper time

²⁶⁶ Johannes Stelzenberger, *Syneidesis im Neuen Testament* (Abhandlungen zur Moraltheologie 1; Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1961), 82-85.

²⁶⁷ The ἐν τούτῳ of v. 4b is causal: "because of this (confident self-awareness)". Moulton-Turner, vol. 3, 253.

²⁶⁸ Charles H. Cosgrove, "Justification in Paul: A Linguistic and Theological Reflection," *JBL* 106 (1987), 663; Eckstein, *Der Begriff Syneidesis*, 206. Compare σωθήσεται in 3:15.

²⁶⁹ μή with present imperative; Moulton-Turner, vol. 3, 74-76.

²⁷⁰ 5:3-5; 5:11-13; 6:1-6; 10:15; 14:24-25. Wayne A. Meeks, "Judgment and the Brother: Romans 14:1-15:13," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of E. Earle Ellis* (ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 294.

(καὶρός) for judgment.²⁷¹ That Christ will return again is, of course, one of the fundamental motifs of Paul's preaching.²⁷² Paul most often mentions the coming parousia together with judgment.²⁷³ Nevertheless, Paul does not often speak of Christ himself as the future judge, and then only in a qualified sense.²⁷⁴ Even here in 1 Cor 4:5 Christ's role is to reveal thoughts and motives, while it is God who judges.²⁷⁵ This distinction agrees with Paul's emphasis throughout 3:5-4:5 that the final accountability is to God, while Christ the Lord plays an intermediate role as the supervisor of the work of his servants (3:5c, 23; 4:1, 4c). What seems to be important for Paul, however, is not so much the distinction between the roles of Christ and God but rather the single united final revealing and accounting which all will face.

One special issue that arises concerns the rhetorical function of 4:1-5. Is Paul primarily concerned with his own relationship with the congregation at Corinth, leading him in these verses to make a self-defense of his ministry or a special plea for his authority and rights as an apostle?²⁷⁶ This sort of interpretation is given by most commentators. My contention, however, is that Paul is not primarily trying to make a point about himself and his relationship with the congregation. Rather, he is setting forth a principle which applies not only to himself, not only to Apollos and Cephas, but also to other teachers and by extension to all who labor in the Gospel, i.e., all believers. Since this interpretation is important to my whole thesis about the function of 1 Cor 3:5-4:5, it needs some further comment.

In the first place, there is no reason to think that the first person plurals of v. 1 refer to Paul alone. The questions of 3:5a are still in

²⁷¹ Paul elsewhere uses καὶρός with an eschatological reference (1 Cor 7:29; Gal 6:9; 2 Thess 2:6), but more frequently in a non-eschatological sense (so Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypik*, 191). Thus it is not here a technical term for the eschaton but rather signifies the appropriate time for a particular action. For πρὸ καιροῦ see Sir 30:24; 51:30; Matt 8:29. For καὶρός of the time of judgment, see Rev 11:18. See Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 84.

²⁷² Although Paul does not often use the terminology of the "coming" of the Lord (besides 1 Cor 4:5 only in 1 Cor 11:26; the Aramaic phrase in 16:22; and 2 Thess 1:10). Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn*, 73-74.

²⁷³ Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus*, 311-13.

²⁷⁴ Theissen, *Psychological Aspects*, 100-104. Only in 2 Cor 5:10 and perhaps in Rom 14:4 and 1 Thess 4:6. But in the Pauline school see Eph 6:8-9; Col 3:24; 2 Tim 4:1, 8, 14. Elsewhere in the NT: Acts 10:42; 17:31.

²⁷⁵ Schade, *Apokalyptische Christologie bei Paulus*, 41.

²⁷⁶ Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 135. Theissen (*Psychological Aspects*, 59) thinks that Paul is claiming special apostolic rights in 4:1-5 and thus contradicts what he says about the subordination of apostles to the congregation in 3:21b-22.

mind, and he mentions Apollos explicitly again in 4:6. As I have argued with reference to 3:5-15, Paul there uses himself and Apollos as a model, intending what he says to be applied to all Christians. The same is true in 4:1-5.²⁷⁷ Paul, in fact, pointedly avoids using the designation "apostle" throughout 3:5-4:5. Paul would not deny any Christian the name of servant of Christ (4:1). The phrase "to each" in 4:5 corresponds to the first person plurals in v. 1. There is nothing in 4:1-2 and 5 which is limited to Paul.

What about the little first person singular "narrative" in 4:3-4, however? How does this function? It has been recognized by some interpreters of Paul that he occasionally punctuates his arguments with model self-reflections intended to teach his readers to think in similar ways. He uses this device to advance his argument by inviting his readers to enter into his own way of thinking and thus to share his perspective on the issue at hand.²⁷⁸ Paul offers himself as a typical Christian. To be sure, 1 Cor 4:3-4 has seldom, if ever, been seen this way.²⁷⁹ These verses are most often taken as a self-defense. But Paul's words in 4:3-4 fit much better within the rhetorical aims of 3:5-4:5 if we see these statements as the expression of a typical Christian's dependence for ultimate evaluation only on the Lord.²⁸⁰ The authority which Paul claims here comes not

²⁷⁷ When he does use "apostle" in 4:9, it is in the plural, which further strengthens my point.

²⁷⁸ This is most commonly seen in Rom 7:7-25; see C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1 (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), 341-42; Cranfield, "Changes of Person and Number in Paul's Epistles," *Paul and Paulinism: Essays in Honour of C. K. Barrett* (ed. M.D. Hooker and S.G. Wilson; London: SPCK, 1982), 288; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary On the Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 152; Nils A. Dahl, "The Missionary Theology in the Epistle to the Romans," Appendix III: "Confession and Comments in Rom. 7:14-25," *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977), 92-94; BDF #281; Allo, *Première Éptre aux Corinthiens*, 345 (with reference to 1 Cor 13:1-3). See also Fiore, "The Function of Personal Example," 341-42; George Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography: Toward a New Understanding* (SBLDS 73; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 10. Also the thesis about the function of Paul's apostolic authority set forth by Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*. Other possible texts where the first person singular is used this way are Rom 3:7; 1 Cor 6:12, 15; 9:12, 15-23, 26-27; 10:29-30, 33; 13:1-3; 14:11, 14-15; 15:9-10, 30-32; Gal 2:18-21; Phil 1:18-26; 3:7-14; 4:11-13. See also the study by Carl R. Holladay ("1 Corinthians 13: Paul as Apostolic Paradigm," *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* [ed. David L. Balch, Wayne Meeks, and Everett Ferguson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990], 83-84, 97-98), who points to Greco-Roman parenetic parallels to the style of using the first person as a paradigm.

²⁷⁹ Fiore ("Covert Allusion," 97) does suggest that Paul uses himself as a model in 4:1-5. Holladay (*First Corinthians*, 58-60) calls Paul's discussion in 4:1-5 paradigmatic.

²⁸⁰ This is the same thought as in 2:15b.

from a special apostolic status or rights but as the shared authority of every person who is in Christ.²⁸¹

Therefore, the beginning of 4:3, "But with me it is a very small thing," is not to be taken as a proud claim of special apostolic independence and exemption from the congregation's judgment. Rather, this is a sober reminder of the way any Christian is to think of himself or herself in relation to the opinions of others. Such a way of thinking will have clear social consequences. If human evaluation means so little to the individual, then such evaluation should not be the focus of social interaction within the community. Paul's words in 4:3-4 express a model way of thinking for those who look for the judgment of God.

A second special issue is the function of Paul's reference to the "conscience" in 4:3-4. The fact that σύννοια/συνείδησις is used more frequently in 1 Corinthians than in any other genuine Pauline letter or in any other NT writing²⁸² has led some to suppose that this word and concept were important to the Corinthians.²⁸³ I suggest, however, that Paul uses the words so frequently in 1 Corinthians because they express a conception which he sees as particularly necessary in admonishing the Corinthian congregation. In Paul's view, the Corinthian penchant for scrutinizing one another violates the special relationship of call and accountability between the individual and the Lord. In 4:4 Paul uses the concept of "conscience" to make the point that not even individual self-awareness is a sufficient measure of this master-servant relationship. In 1 Cor 8:7, 10, and 12 Paul admonishes those who by their freedom violate the "weak conscience" of others. That is, they interfere in another way with the individual's relationship with the Lord. Likewise, in 10:25-29 Paul takes it as axiomatic that a primary consideration is the freedom of one's own conscience, that is, one's individual responsibility to God. At the same time, this freedom must be balanced by care not to violate the same individual freedom of another Christian.

Gerd Theissen has recently argued for a startling thesis largely on the basis of 1 Cor 4:3-4: Paul was the most important pioneer in the

²⁸¹ See Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 204; Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography*, 226-27 (neither, however, with reference to 1 Cor 4:1-5).

²⁸² Actually, 1 Cor 4:4 is the only use of the verb σύννοια in a moral sense in the NT. συνείδησις occurs twice in Acts, six times in the Pastorals, four times in Hebrews, and three times in 1 Peter. All these, with the exception of 1 Peter 2:19, have something approaching a technical moral sense. Outside of 1 Corinthians (where it occurs eight times) the word is used by Paul only three times in Romans and three times in 2 Corinthians.

²⁸³ Dupont, "Gnosis", 266-67.

development of the conception of an unconscious dimension within the human mind.²⁸⁴ Theissen argues that three factors come together in 1 Cor 4:4-5 which enable Paul to grasp the idea of an unconscious dimension. First, there is the belief that God knows people's inner thoughts and motives. Second, Paul admits that he could have guilt which is not known to his own conscious mind. This admission is made possible by the fact that Paul perceives himself as one who will be saved by Christ at the judgment, in spite of the possibility that unconscious guilt will be uncovered. Admitting the possibility of such unknown guilt does not threaten him.²⁸⁵ Third, Paul shows an awareness of inner processes which are not totally within his own control. All of this is sharpened by the belief that only in God's future judgment will these unconscious motives be uncovered. Paul has been pushed to his discovery of the unconscious by the Corinthian situation, in which Paul feels a sharp social tension between the Corinthian expectation of him and his own criteria for his ministry.²⁸⁶

As one would expect, Theissen's exegesis is often incisive and his thesis stimulating. In the end, however, his insistence on treating 1 Cor 4:1-5 from the perspective of psychology leads him to miss what is, in my opinion, the main purpose of Paul's remarks. Theissen sees Paul's purpose as primarily self-defense. Paul is claiming exemption from Corinthian judgment on the grounds that if even he himself cannot see his own motives, then surely the Corinthians cannot see his motives. Accordingly, Theissen takes v. 5 as the explication of v. 4ab. What the Lord will reveal at the final judgment is these unconscious motives. In my analysis, however, v. 4ab serves only as an aside to explain why Paul does not regard himself as the ultimate examiner of his ministry. The reason why Paul's own judgment does not count is that he looks only to his master Christ for his examination and justification. The reason is not, as Theissen would have it, that his knowledge of his own guilt is limited. Paul is not concerned with the question of what one can or cannot know about oneself. Rather, the issue is upon whom Paul (and thus any Christian) rests his hopes. Further, as I will show below, v. 5 is not concerned with the revealing of unconscious motives hidden to one's own conscience. Rather, it implicitly contrasts the zeal of the Corinthians for examining and evaluating the wisdom of teachers to the

²⁸⁴ Part 2 in *Psychological Aspects* (pp. 57-114) is titled: "The Secrets of the Heart: The Disclosure of Unconscious Motives through Pauline Theology." Pp. 59-66 are on 1 Cor 4:1-5. He also deals at length with 1 Cor 14:23-25 and Rom 2:15-16 in this connection.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 97.

responsibility of the Lord alone to do such evaluation. Theissen fails to see the larger social function of Paul's first person reflection in 4:3-4.

A third issue that needs special attention is Paul's emphasis on eschatological disclosure in 4:5. We have seen how emphatically Paul speaks about this revealing aspect of judgment in 3:13-15. Now in 4:5, at the very climax of this second major section of his whole argument in 1:10-4:21, Paul once again speaks of divine future judgment in terms of examination and disclosure.

The words, ". . . the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart," quite likely are a quotation from or at least a reflection of an early Christian apocalyptic tradition, similar to 2 Cor 5:10.²⁸⁷ One cannot on this basis say, however, that the emphasis on disclosure is superfluous. In fact, it is precisely this emphasis which Paul wants the quotation to underscore.²⁸⁸ In 3:13-15 what is to be revealed is the quality of each one's work. In 4:5 what is to be revealed are the "hidden things" and "purposes of the heart," that is, thoughts and motives. The point is that not only do members of the congregation not have the authority to judge one another, but also that they cannot adequately judge. They cannot see into a person's thoughts and motives any more than they can tell in advance how a person's work in the church will turn out.²⁸⁹

The verbs in 4:5, φωτίσει²⁹⁰ and φανερώσει, parallel the four-fold emphasis on eschatological disclosure in 3:13. This emphasis on eschatological disclosure is all the more striking because it is a theme not often connected with final judgment in early Christian literature. The only close parallel in Paul is 2 Cor 5:10. *Hermas Sim.* 4.2-4 emphasizes the revealing of the righteous and sinners at the final judgment.²⁹¹ Paul does in fact seem to be the first writer in Jewish-Christian tradition to bring together the conception of final judgment with the motif of divine

²⁸⁷ This is suggested by a number of factors: Paul uses "Lord comes" only in the traditions which he quotes in 1 Cor 11:26 and 16:22. The use of the relative ὅς suggests a Christological tradition. The synonymous parallelism of the two καί clauses suggests a poetic structure. The vocabulary is unusual for Paul: φωτίζειν occurs only here in Paul; τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ σκότους occurs only here in the NT; βουλή occurs only here in the undisputed Pauline letters. Many commentators think it is a quotation: Theissen, *Psychological Aspects*, 63-64; Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus*, 42-43; Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalyptik*, 191; Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn*, 72-74; Schade, *Apokalyptische Christologie bei Paulus*, 41; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 84.

²⁸⁸ In a sense the revelatory role of Christ in 4:5 is parallel to the function of fire in 3:13-15. Guntermann, *Die Eschatologie des hl. Paulus*, 221.

²⁸⁹ Murphy-O'Connor, *1 Corinthians*, 29.

²⁹⁰ Heliodorus (*Aethiopica* 8.13) uses this verb to speak of the divine revealing of "secret crimes." See also Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 10.10.2.

²⁹¹ φανερός is used to speak of God's knowledge of human hearts in the LXX in Prov 15:11; 16:2; 2 Macc 6:30; 12:41. But none of these are with reference to God's judgment.

omniscience or revealing.²⁹² We saw above in Chapters Two and Three that both Judaism and Greco-Roman tradition used the idea of divine omniscience to sanction moral recompense in the present time. What we need to note is that this motif is almost always used to underscore God's moral concern with the individual. It is no accident that the stress on eschatological disclosure becomes prominent only in the relatively late Jewish works in which individual moral recompense is the function of the judgment language.²⁹³ So also Paul uses the motif of divine disclosure in order to speak of God's final judgment in a way that lays stress upon the particular fate of each individual.

Some commentators take the phrase "the things now hidden in darkness" to refer to hidden faults.²⁹⁴ This is not necessarily the case and in fact does not fit well here in 4:5. The parallelism with "the purposes of the heart" indicates that "darkness" here is not used in a negative moral sense. Rather, it serves to underscore the obscurity of human motives to other people.²⁹⁵ Likewise, κρυπτός and cognates can refer to something morally repugnant (2 Cor 4:2 and Eph 5:12), but more often they are used to call attention to God's ability to know things that cannot be known by normal human means.²⁹⁶ It is frequently recognized that whatever a person thinks or plans by himself in his heart is effectively hidden to all but God.²⁹⁷

That the phrase "hidden things" refers to thoughts and motives is suggested by the parallel in the next phrase, τὰς βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν,

²⁹² I find no evidence that anyone in antiquity thought that divine revealing in the eschaton or afterlife contradicts the belief in divine omniscience at all times.

²⁹³ 4 Ezra 14:35; 1 Enoch 98:6-8; and many texts which speak of books kept to be opened at the judgment, for example, T. Abr. 13:9; 2 Baruch 83:1-3.

²⁹⁴ Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 65; Theissen, *Psychological Aspects*, 64-65. Theissen notes that this phrase would then contradict the positive result anticipated at the end of 4:5; but he takes this to be evidence that Paul is quoting a tradition.

²⁹⁵ Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 78. To be sure, "darkness" often has a negative moral sense: Prov 2:13; 4:19; 1QM 1:10; 3:6-7; T. Reuben 3:8; T. Levi 14:4; T. Dan 2:4; Philo *Leg. All.* 1.46; *Deus Imm.* 123; *Conf. Ling.* 116; *Som.* 2.140; *Spec. Leg.* 1.288; John 3:19-21; Luke 22:53; 1 John 1:6; 2:9, 11; Rom 13:12; 2 Cor 6:14; 1 Thess 5:4-5; Eph 5:8, 11; 6:12; Col 1:13. But "darkness" can be used also in a morally neutral sense to refer to that which keeps something from being seen: Isa 29:15; Dan 2:22; Matt 10:27; Luke 12:3. See Hans Conzelmann, "σκότος, κτλ.," *TDNT* 7, 442; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 103; Moulton-Turner, vol. 3, 14.

²⁹⁶ Rom 2:16; Matt 6:4-6, 18; 10:26; Mark 4:22; Luke 8:17; 12:2; Heb 4:12-13; 1 Pet 3:4.

²⁹⁷ Deut 15:9; Ps 43:22 (44:21MT); Isa 29:15; Sir 1:30; 16:17; 17:15, 20; 23:18-19; 39:19; Wis 17:3; 2 Macc 12:41; Susanna 42 (Theod.); *Aristeas* 131-133, 210; *Pseudo-Phocylides*, line 48; T. Reuben 1:4; T. Levi 8:19; Philo *Som.* 1.90-91; *Leg. All.* 3.43; *Cher.* 16-17; Josephus *Jewish War* 5.402, 413; *Against Apion* 2.166; 1 Enoch 9:5; 49:4; 61:8-9; 2 Enoch 66:3 (long); 2 Baruch 83:1-3; 1 Cor 14:25; 1 Pet 3:4; 2 Clem. 16:3; Ign. *Phil.* 7:1; *Magn.* 3:2; Eph. 15:3; Polycarp *Phil.* 4:3.

which in effect says literally what the previous phrase says metaphorically. The word βουλή in this context with "heart" refers to the plans or intents which people form in their minds.²⁹⁸ Again, Paul is drawing on a long tradition that recognizes the βουλή as something hidden in a person's heart²⁹⁹ and that only God can know such motives.³⁰⁰ Unlike βουλή, καρδία is a term much used by Paul, sometimes as the seat of ignorance or evil (Rom 1:21, 24; 2:5; compare Eph 4:18) but more often as the seat of knowledge, belief, emotion, or will.³⁰¹ Twice Paul makes a contrast between outward appearance and the heart (2 Cor 5:12; 1 Thess 2:17). Paul once again is drawing on a long and rich tradition which sees the heart as the special object of God's omniscient searching.³⁰²

In 1 Cor 4:5 the revealing by Christ and judging by God are seen as two separate actions. In Rom 2:16, on the other hand, the two are collapsed into one action: God judges the hidden things of people.³⁰³ In both Rom 2:16 and 1 Cor 4:5 Paul looks to the future judgment as the ultimate revelation and evaluation. The structure of thought in these two passages is similar. In Rom 2:16 the future evaluation of the inner law of the heart renders the present outward difference between Jew and Gentile meaningless. Rom 2:28-29 uses future judgment again to make the same point. The outward differences by which human praises are determined mean nothing to God, for God's judgment will assign praise on the basis of what is hidden in the heart. In Rom 2 the fact of God's future judgment makes present judgments concerning Jews and Gentiles

²⁹⁸ Gottlob Schrenk, "βούλομαι, κτλ.," *TDNT* 1,635. The word occurs only here in the undisputed Pauline letters. In the NT it mostly refers to God's will. In Luke-Acts it sometimes refers to a collective decision. The word is used of inner intentions elsewhere in the NT only in Acts 19:1 in D. Paul does use the verb βούλομαι to refer to individual decision in 2 Cor 1:15 and 17; Phil 1:12; Phlm 13.

²⁹⁹ Prov 20:5. Philo often uses a threefold anthropological principle in his exegesis: "mouth" refers to words, "hands" to actions, "heart" to βουλή or διάνοια (*Poster. C.* 85; *Mut Nom.* 237; *Virt.* 183; *Praem. Poen.* 80; *Som.* 2.180; *Omn. Prob. Lib.* 68; see also *Leg. Gaium* 67 and *Congr.* 4).

³⁰⁰ Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.1.19; Isa 29:15; Wis 6:3; Philo *Spec. Leg.* 3.121; Josephus *Antiquities* 2.23.

³⁰¹ Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 84. Similar usage in the rest of the NT and Jewish writings. On "heart" in Jewish texts see Russell, *Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 141-43, 396-98.

³⁰² In Paul himself also in Rom 8:27; 1 Cor 14:25; 1 Thess 2:4; 3:13. Elsewhere in Luke 2:35; 16:15; Heb 4:12; Rev 2:23. See also the term for God found only in Christian texts, καρδιογνώστης (Acts 1:24; 15:8; *Herm. Man.* 4.3.4; compare 2 *Clem.* 9:9). In Jewish literature: 1 Kgdms 16:7; 3 Kgdms 8:39=2 Chron 6:30; 1 Chron 28:9; 29:17; Ps 7:9; 25:2 (26:2MT); 138:23 (139:23MT); Prov 15:11; 17:3; 24:12; Jer 11:20; 12:3; 17:10; 20:12; Judith 8:27; Sir 42:18; Wis 1:6; *Pss. Sol.* 14:8; *Pseudo-Philo Bib. Ant.* 50:4; 2 *Enoch* 53:1-3.

³⁰³ On Rom 2:16 see Theissen, *Psychological Aspects*, 66-74.

illegitimate. In 1 Cor 4:5 the fact of God's future judgment makes present judgments concerning the relative status of teachers illegitimate. In both cases present judgments are ruled out because what counts with God are thoughts and motives which only God can see.

In 1 Cor 14:24-25, on the other hand, the hidden things of the heart are made manifest in the present church rather than in the future judgment. This passage seems to turn 1 Cor 4:5 (as well as 2:15b) on its head and flatly contradict it. The church is told to reprove and examine (ἀνακρίνειν) a person in order to make known (φανερός) the secrets of his heart (τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ). This latter phrase in fact seems to be a combination of the two separate phrases of 4:5 into one shortened formula.³⁰⁴ The two passages, however, are not really contradictory. First, such prophetic uncovering of a person's thoughts is still seen as the prerogative of God (see the end of v. 25), since it comes not from the human intellect but from divinely inspired prophecy. Second, the object of such scrutiny is the unbeliever or novice, for the purpose of conversion, not the believer. Paul commends such examination as an appropriate function of the prophetic gift. Perhaps the Corinthians have attempted to carry over this prophetic process from its legitimate function in conversion to the illegitimate function of determining status within the body of Christ. It is only the "spiritual person" (i.e., the believer) who cannot be examined by the prophetic gift (2:15b). In the case of a prospective convert, however, such prophetic scrutiny of thoughts leads to a recognition of God's presence.

A fourth special point concerns the striking and unusual way that Paul describes the outcome of God's judgment at the end of 4:5: "Then every one will receive his praise from God." As in 3:8b and 3:14-15 Paul has in view here only the judgment of Christians. Salvation is assumed, and corporate condemnation is not considered.³⁰⁵ Ἐπαινος is parallel to μισθός (3:8 and 14) in that it expresses the thought of individually appropriate rewards, not just corporate salvation.³⁰⁶ Paul expresses this same idea of individual commendation for Christians in other terms such as "boast" (2 Cor 1:14; Gal 6:4; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 2:19), "crown" (1 Cor 9:25; 1 Thess 2:19), and "prize" (Phil 3:14).³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 79; discussion of the passage on pp. 74-80. See also Dautzenberg, *Urchristliche Prophetie*, 247-49.

³⁰⁵ Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus*, 184.

³⁰⁶ Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 173. Lightfoot (*Notes on Epistles*, 198) suggests that the definite article has a real force here, and translates "the praise due him." Praise and rewards from God are connected in Josephus *Antiquities* 1.183; Philo *Som.* 2.38.

³⁰⁷ See Volf, *Paul and Perseverance*, 246-47. This is similar to the "well done" macarisms of the Gospels (Matt 25:21 and 23; Luke 19:17).

Paul uses ἔπαινος also in Rom 2:29 to refer to the reward of eschatological judgment. As in 1 Cor 3:5-15, Paul uses ἑκάστος in 4:5 to emphasize individual diversity in the level of praise. The form of the statement indicates that this judgment applies in principle to all Christians.³⁰⁸

Within Jewish and Christian tradition "praise" as a term for the result of God's judgment is rare.³⁰⁹ In fact, after the stress on revealing of inner motives one might well expect a term of condemnation in 1 Cor 4:5. An interesting parallel is found in 2 *Baruch* 83:1-3 (see Chapter Two). It is structured much the same as 1 Cor 4:5, but the result is said to be "blame" instead of praise. Paul's usage should be understood in the light of the rhetorical situation in 1 Cor 1:10-4:21. "Praise" was one of the highest goals within Greco-Roman society.³¹⁰ Especially in civic life individuals sought the status of public praise. We have seen how Greco-Roman tradition often describes postmortem judgment in terms of praise bestowed on individuals. In the Corinthian congregation great value was placed on the community's judgments about the wisdom of individual teachers. To say, "I am of Paul," to boast about the eloquence of Apollos, to be "puffed up" in favor of one against another—all these are expressions of the human praise so much sought after and bestowed on some by the Corinthian Christians. Against this premature and divisive praise that results from the judgments being made in Corinth Paul sets the ultimate praise bestowed by God at the final judgment.³¹¹ This affirms the individual diversity of teachers but asks that Christians wait for God to reward each one appropriately. The use of "praise" as a term for judgment indicates how Paul's rhetorical strategy led him to stretch traditional Jewish and Christian language about God's judgment in a direction that would resonate with the Corinthian way of thinking. Paul in effect anticipates a postmortem eulogy from God for individual Christians.

³⁰⁸ Theissen, *Psychological Aspects*, 62-63. Compare 2 Cor 5:10; Rom 14:12; Gal 6:5.

³⁰⁹ Never in the OT. Philo often speaks of God's praise for virtue, but not with reference to judgment. 4 Ezra 8:48 speaks of being found "praiseworthy" before God; 1 *Clem.* 30:6 probably depends on 1 Cor 4:5. The word is more often used of praise to God (Eph 1:6, 12, 14; Phil 1:11; Rom 15:11).

³¹⁰ Lietzmann, *An die Korinther*, 19; Fridrichsen, "Der wahre Jude und sein Lob," 47-48; Herbert Preisker, "ἔπαινος," *TDNT* 2, 586-88; Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Library of Early Christianity; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 27, 77. In Jewish tradition see, for example, the praise of famous people in Sirach 44, and also Josephus *Against Apion* 136. The importance of praise is reflected in the NT in the tradition of praise received from the government for doing good (Rom 13:3; 1 Pet 2:14). Paul connects virtue and praise in Phil 4:8. So also does Josephus (*Antiquities* 2.161; 17.153; 19.231). See also Epictetus *Diss.* 1.18.22; 2.13.4; 2.16.5-7; 3.23.7; 3.23.19; 4.7.29; Dio Chrysostom 31.111.

³¹¹ Ruef, *Paul's First Letter to Corinth*, 30.

In summary, Paul argues in 1 Cor 4:1-5 that evaluation of the individual servant of Christ is done competently neither by other Christians nor by one's own conscience. Only God can bestow proper praise, and then only at the future judgment, when Christ will reveal thoughts and motives which are now hidden to human investigation. As in all of 3:5-4:5 Paul has in mind particularly the teachers who were the most prominent objects of Corinthian evaluation. However, the generalizing use of the first person singular in vv. 3-4 and the universalizing form of the statements in v. 5 indicate that Paul is making a particular use of a principle that in fact applies to all Christians.

A More Direct Rhetorical Attack on the Problem (1 Corinthians 4:6-13)

After reaching the climax of the major section of 3:5-4:5, Paul in 4:6-13 stops to clarify the intent of what he has been saying and begins to drive home his admonition in a fresh way. This section is important for our understanding of 3:5-4:5, in three ways. First, it clarifies the function of Paul's references to himself and Apollos (v. 6). Second, it confirms Paul's analysis of the situation in terms of individual attitudes of self-importance and self-satisfaction (vv. 7-8). Third, it sheds further light on the way Paul uses himself (and other leaders) as an example of servants whose only legitimate status is bestowed by God (vv. 9-13).

1 Cor 4:6 - Clarifying the Function of 3:5-4:5

Paul in 1 Cor 4:6 clarifies for his readers two things about what he has just said in 3:5-4:5: the indirect method and the admonitory goal. He explains that he has not been directing an attack against Apollos or his followers. Rather, he has been discussing Apollos and himself in order to admonish the Corinthian congregation as a whole. The use of the direct address, "brothers,"³¹² and the second person plural objects of this verse signal to Paul's readers that they are the main object of his concern. The word ταῦτα most likely refers to 3:5-4:5, for that is the section which deals with Paul and Apollos.³¹³ Thus, 4:6 joins with

³¹² Paul uses "brothers" to open other sections which center on the Corinthian situation (1:10 and 11; 1:26; 3:1; compare 2:1).

³¹³ Some commentators think that ταῦτα refers to all of 1:10-4:5 (Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God*, 286; Fiore, "Covert Allusion," 94; Olof Linton, "'Nicht über das hinaus, was geschrieben steht' (1 Kor. 4,6)," *TSK* 102 [1930], 432). But it is hard to imagine, given the reference to Paul and Apollos in 4:6, that Paul's readers would think of any other section than the one in which Paul and Apollos are the main subject.

3:1-4 as introductory and concluding transitions which set off 3:5-4:5 as a major rhetorical unit.

The precise sense of μετεσχημάτισα in 4:6 is notoriously difficult. Other elements in the sentence, however, help to indicate what Paul means. The words δι' ὑμῶν, "for your sake," indicate that Paul's rhetorical goal has been change in the Corinthians, not a change in his relationship with Apollos. In the phrase ἐν ἡμῖν the instrumental ἐν signifies that Paul has used himself and Apollos merely as the means to a different end.³¹⁴ The ἵνα μάθῃτε clause states that end to be the instruction of the Corinthians as a community.³¹⁵ This context is our best guide to the meaning of μετεσχημάτισα, rather than any supposed technical rhetorical sense of the word. One such theory holds that μετεσχημάτισα refers to the rhetorical device of "covert allusion." In this view Paul is using the device of λόγος ἐσχηματισμένος to hold himself and Apollos up as a positive model and to avoid engaging in direct criticism of the Corinthians.³¹⁶ By this oblique way of dealing with a delicate subject Paul seeks to avoid offending his listeners, just as rhetoricians counseled those who would attempt to chide a king.³¹⁷ The only problem with this view is that all the rhetorical discussions of this device use the words σχῆμα and σχηματίζειν, not the compound word with μετα-. Further, Paul's other uses of μετασχηματίζειν have no technical rhetorical reference.³¹⁸ Other scholars hold that Paul is using

Most other commentators agree that 3:5-4:5 is the reference: Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 80; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 101; Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 165; Fitzgerald, "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 227 note 13.

³¹⁴ Fitzgerald, "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 230 note 18; see Phil 4:9.

³¹⁵ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 106.

³¹⁶ Chrysostom sees this rhetorical device being used in 1 Cor 1-4; but in his view Paul actually disguised the real party leaders under the names of Paul and Apollos (Homily 12 on 1 Cor 4:6; see F. H. Colson, "Μετεσχημάτισα 1 Cor. iv 6," *JTS* 17 [1915-16], 382-83). In a similar vein, some modern commentators think that Paul chooses to discuss himself and Apollos rather than the party leaders who have caused more serious problems (Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 199; Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 80-81; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 105-106).

³¹⁷ This position is set forth in detail, with reference to ancient rhetorical practices, by Fiore, "The Function of Personal Example," 319-22 (see also "Covert Allusion," 89-96); Fiore is followed by Fitzgerald, "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 224-26. Heinrici (*Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 146-47) held a similar view. For texts see especially (Pseudo-) Demetrius *On Style* 289 and all of 287-98; Quintilian *Inst. Or.* 9.2.65-67; Philostratus *Lives of Sophists* 561.

³¹⁸ In the active, "transform," in Phil 3:21; in the middle "disguise oneself," three times in 2 Cor 11:13-15. In Paul σχῆμα is used in 1 Cor 7:31, "the form of this world," and of the human form in Phil 2:7. Hellenistic Jewish texts consistently use μετασχηματίζειν to refer to the physical transformation of appearance, not to a rhetorical device (4 Macc 9:22; 1 Kgdms 28:8 Symmachus; T. Reuben 5:6; Josephus *Antiquities* 7.257; 8.267; Philo *Aet. Mund.* 79; *De Leg. Gaium* 80 and 346). The same is true generally in Greek texts; see LSI and BAGD under μετασχηματίζειν.

μετεσχημάτισα in a loose or catachrestic way to mean something like "to illustrate" or "to exemplify."³¹⁹

I suggest that we translate μετεσχημάτισα, in line with Paul's other uses of the word, something like this: "Brothers, I have transformed this discussion (of matters that involve all of you) into (a discussion of) myself and Apollos for your sake. . . ." Paul means that, although he and Apollos are certainly interested parties in the factional strife, the root of the problem lies in the Corinthian congregation. The function of 4:6 is to get the Corinthians to transfer what they have learned from reading about Paul and Apollos to their own behavior.³²⁰ They should change their attitudes and behavior by seeing in Paul and Apollos a model of unity rather than an occasion for divisive competitiveness.

This interpretation of 4:6 is confirmed by the explicit exhortation to imitate Paul's "ways" in 4:16-17.³²¹ Apollos is implicitly considered to be a model along with Paul in 3:5-9 and is probably included as part of the apostolic example in 4:9-13.³²² Yet it is really himself that Paul offers as a model to the Corinthians, as can be seen in 4:1-5 and 4:16-17. As I suggested with reference to 4:1-5, what is modelled is not in the first instance behavior but rather a way of thinking in Christ.³²³ In 3:5-4:5 Paul shows by his own example how the anticipation of God's judgment leads to a proper view of oneself in relation to others in the Christian community. Paul wants the Corinthians to see things as he sees them, that is, not as the world evaluates wisdom, but rather as these things appear in the light of God's judgment.³²⁴

The two ἵνα clauses of 4:6 state the actual goal of Paul's treatment of himself and Apollos as examples in 3:5-4:5. Most commentators are right to see the second ἵνα clause dependent on the first,³²⁵ which only

³¹⁹ Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 101; Colson, "Μετεσχημάτισα," 379-81; Johannes Schneider, "σχῆμα, μετασχηματίζω," *TDNT* 7, 958; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 85-86.

³²⁰ Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, 165.

³²¹ Other places where Paul makes explicit reference to himself as a model are 1 Cor 11:1; Gal 4:12; Phil 3:17; 4:9; 1 Thess 1:6; (2 Thess 3:7, 9). See Fiore, "The Function of Personal Example."

³²² The "we" in 4:9 includes at least Apollos. On the use of the first person singular and plural in Paul see Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography*, 10-15; Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic, and Word of God*, 286.

³²³ Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 203.

³²⁴ Fiore, "The Function of Personal Example," 341-43.

³²⁵ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 107; Linton, "'Nicht über das hinaus'," 430. Fitzgerald ("Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 228) takes the two clauses to be parallel and equally dependent on μετεσχημάτισα, but then one would expect a καὶ.

serves to underscore the frustration over what τὸ μὴ ὑπὲρ ἃ γέγραπται might mean. It is possible that the text as it stands has been corrupted.³²⁶ There is one proposal, however, that seems to offer a reasonable solution to the crux. That is to see the word τὸ as the introduction to the quotation of a well-known saying. The words μὴ ὑπὲρ ἃ γέγραπται would be the quotation, a quasi-proverbial slogan with the verb understood.³²⁷ What, then, does the quotation mean? Most commentators take it as a reference to OT Scripture, perhaps the texts quoted by Paul in 1:19 and 31 and 3:19-20.³²⁸ Others paraphrase it as "keep within the rules"³²⁹ or "not too much,"³³⁰ both of which would have analogies in Rom 12:3 and 2 Cor 10:12-13.³³¹ The most likely possibility, however, is that the phrase refers to the ancient practice of training children to write by having them trace the outline of letters drawn by the teacher.³³²

³²⁶ Although the actual MSS variants, both ὃ instead of ἃ and the addition of φρονεῖν, are quite likely secondary "improvements." J.M.S. Baljon suggested that the whole phrase was a scribal gloss which was later taken into the text; it should be translated, "The μὴ was written above α." Baljon's suggestion was accepted by Héring, *First Corinthians*, 28; and by André Legault, "Beyond the Things which are Written" (1 Cor. IV.6)," *NTS* 18 (1971-72) 227-31. More recently, John Strugnell ("A Plea for Conjectural Emendation in the New Testament, with a Coda on 1 Cor 4:6," *CBQ* 36 [1974], 555-58) makes a similar suggestion; but he takes it to mean instead, "the μὴ is beyond what was written." That is, the word μὴ was not in the text from which the scribe was copying.

³²⁷ Most commentators agree with this much: Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 81; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 106; Fitzgerald, "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 230.

³²⁸ Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 199; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 106; Ruef, *Paul's First Letter to Corinth*, 32; Morna D. Hooker, "Beyond the Things Which Are Written: An Examination of 1 Cor. IV.6," *NTS* 10 (1963-64), 129; Karl Ludwig Schmidt, "Nicht über das hinaus, was geschrieben steht! (1. Kor. 4,6)," *In Memoriam Ernst Lohmeyer* (ed. W. Schmauch; Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlag, 1951), 101-109. Linton ("Nicht über das hinaus," 434-36) thinks it is a maxim of Apollon about Scripture. Lyder Brun ("Noch einmal die Schriftnorm 1 Kor. 4,6," *TSK* 103 [1931], 453-56) thinks it is a Corinthian slogan as quoted. Lütgert and Schlatter, on the other hand, think that the Corinthian slogan was "beyond Scripture!", and that Paul adds the negative; they build much of their interpretation of the Corinthian opponents on this "enthusiastic" Corinthian disregard for Scripture.

³²⁹ J. M. Ross, "Not Above What is Written: A Note on 1 Cor 4:6," *ExpTim* 82 (1970-71), 215-17.

³³⁰ P. Wallis ("Ein neuer Auslegungsversuch der Stelle I. Kor. 4,6," *TLZ* 75 [1950], 507-508) wants to put a comma after τὸ μὴ ὑπὲρ and have ἃ γέγραπται refer back to ταῦτα. L. L. Welborn ("A Conciliatory Principle in 1 Cor 4:6," *NovT* 29 [1987], 320-46) offers an interesting but unconvincing suggestion that the usage is from political rhetoric, referring to written treaties or laws.

³³¹ Marshall ("Hybrists Not Gnostics in Corinth," 280) takes it as a warning against excessive behavior, overstepping the bounds of hybris, connecting it with 4:7-8; also *Enmity in Corinth*, 197, 203.

³³² Even though this precise phrase is not found. The theory was first suggested by Schlier. It is argued in detail by Fitzgerald, "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 230-38. He is followed by Fiore, "The Function of Personal Example," 322-23 note 24.

If this view is correct, then Paul is underscoring his exhortation for them to follow the model set before them in 3:5-4:5.

In any case, the main point is reached in the second ἵνα clause with its exhortation "that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another." The indefinite tone of this admonition suggests that Paul intends a broader reference than just to Paul, Apollos, and Cephas factions. It seems likely that such elevating of one at the expense of another extended also to local members of the congregation, not just to travelling evangelists.³³³ The Corinthian love of attaining the status of a wise person superior to those who cannot demonstrate such wisdom is likely to have engendered conflicts on many levels. To be "puffed up" in this divisive way is similar to "boasting about people" (3:21).³³⁴ The word suggests more than a simple choosing of sides; it implies that individual arrogance and self-satisfaction in the attainment of wisdom played a role in the conflicts.³³⁵

A New Attack on Corinthian Attitudes - 1 Cor 4:7-8

In the last clause of 4:6 Paul leads his readers back to the problem of factional strife. Then in vv. 7-8 he sharpens his attack by means of a sarcastic outburst that serves to show what Paul thinks is behind their being "puffed up" and their "boasting about people" (3:21). The forceful tone is conveyed by the second person singular address, as if to a representative individual, in v. 7³³⁶ and the ironic exclamations in the second person plural in 4:8.³³⁷

It is with good reason that many commentators have looked to these verses, especially 4:8, as a key to discovering the intellectual basis of the Corinthian behavior. As I showed in Chapter One, the common view is that by the three opening clauses of 4:8 (ἡδὴ . . ἡδὴ . . χωρὶς ἡμῶν . . .) Paul implies that the Corinthians believed that all the blessings promised at the end of the ages were already in their possession. This eschatological interpretation is possible, but it seems to me to be both unnecessary and less than compelling in the context of 1:10-4:21. I

³³³ Theissen, "Legitimation and Subsistence," 55-56.

³³⁴ Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 104. Note other uses of "puffed up" to describe Corinthian attitudes in 4:18-19; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4. In 4:6, however, is the only use in which an object is expressed.

³³⁵ Contrast to 4:6 Paul's frequent exhortations to have concern for "the other"—1 Cor 10:24; 14:17; Gal 6:2, 4; Phil 2:4.

³³⁶ The only use of such an apostrophe in 1:10-4:21.

³³⁷ If one punctuates the first three clauses as questions some of the ironic forcefulness is lost, but the sense is basically the same.

submit that an "ethical" interpretation makes better exegetical sense and can also be located in a more plausible intellectual milieu.

The γάρ connecting v. 7 to v. 6 indicates two things. First, vv. 7-8 in some way are intended to explicate the attitudes which lie behind the social conflict alluded to in v. 6. Second, Paul here, as elsewhere in 1:10-4:21, is not content to see the problem only on the level of group conflict. Rather, he probes more deeply to get at the underlying ways of thinking characteristic of the Corinthian Christians. It is this individual intellectual level that Paul addresses in vv. 7-8, especially in the second person singular style of v. 7.

The three short incisive questions of v. 7 (who. . . what. . . why. . . ?) all convey the impression that many Corinthians revel in making distinctions among themselves based on the acquisition of wisdom. The meaning of the first question is not quite clear because of the absolute use of διακρίνειν (it is not said what the person is distinguished from). We might paraphrase, "Who made you so special?" In any case, Paul is referring to an attitude of individual superiority, not to the conflict between groups.³³⁸ Paul pictures individuals measuring themselves against other individuals. Paul's rhetorical question implies that such distinctions have no basis except in the Corinthians' own minds (a theme prominent in 3:5-9 and 4:1-5); this is the same as being "puffed up" (4:6).³³⁹ Such self-inflated status has no standing before the Lord.

The second question, "What have you that you did not receive?", undercuts their self-inflation from the other side. What wisdom and spiritual gifts they do have were received as gifts from God,³⁴⁰ not acquired by their own exertions. Paul frequently in 1 Corinthians grounds interpersonal unity in the church in the spiritual benefactions of God (1:4-7; 3:5, 10; 7:7; 12:4-11, 28-31). There are a variety of blessings which the Corinthians have received from God: the revelation of Christ (2:12, 16), God's grace (1:4; 3:10), gifts of the Spirit (1:7; 7:7; 12:4-11, 28-31; 14:26), wisdom and knowledge (1:5; 8:1, 10), and the Holy Spirit (6:19; 7:40).

With the third question of v. 7 Paul returns to a term which he uses elsewhere about the Corinthian attitude—boasting. Paul sees individual Corinthians using their spiritual possessions in order to set themselves above others. From this it is a short step to set one leader above another

³³⁸ The other uses in 1 Cor of διακρίνειν (all active) are not related in sense to the use in 4:7.

³³⁹ Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 151; Marshall, *Enmity in Ccorinth*, 204-05.

³⁴⁰ It seems clear that Paul is thinking of God's benefactions, not his own preaching, as the source of the gift. Marshall, "Hybrists Not Gnostics," 281.

(3:21 and 4:6). In Paul's view such boasting within the Christian community is the same as boasting against God, since it in effect denies the benefaction of God (1:29, 31).

Verse 8 serves, by means of biting sarcasm, to show the absurdity of their boasting. The three phrases, "Already. . .already. . .without us. . .," since they are Paul's ironic formulations, should not be taken too straightforwardly as claims made by the Corinthians; they are Paul's own *reductio ad absurdum* of the Corinthian way of thinking.³⁴¹ The key to understanding what this verse might tell us about the Corinthian way of thinking is, of course, the precise sense of the double ἤδη. Most commonly, "already" is taken to refer to the present time as opposed to the apocalyptic future of God, when alone the Christian can properly anticipate being filled, rich and a king.³⁴² Support for this eschatological interpretation can be found in the parallel πρὸ καιροῦ in 4:5, in other uses of ἤδη to refer to the present experience of things normally reserved for the future,³⁴³ and in other early Christian instances of the consciousness of decisive eschatological events having already taken place.³⁴⁴

In my view, however, an "ethical" interpretation of 1 Cor 4:8 makes much more sense than the eschatological interpretation.³⁴⁵ ἤδη should be taken to mean that they think of themselves as morally and spiritually perfected, without having to experience the bodily struggles which Paul sees as the sign of life in Christ.³⁴⁶ One could paraphrase, "So

³⁴¹ Horsley, "'How can some of you say,'" 203.

³⁴² Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 178-79. Some who argue for this eschatological interpretation are Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 16-17; Baird, *The Corinthian Church*, 39; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 88; Balz, *Christus in Korinth*, 48; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 109; Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 67; Fascher, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 148; Schottroff, *Der Glaubende und die feindliche Welt*, 185-86; and above all, Robinson, "Kerygma and History in the New Testament," 33-34.

³⁴³ Matt 17:12; John 3:18; 2 Tim 2:18. See Philo *De Vita Cont.* 13, where the members of the sect are said to have abandoned their property because they thought that their mortal lives were "already" ended. See also some Gnostic texts cited by Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth*, 180-81.

³⁴⁴ Col 2:12-13; Eph 2:5-6; John 5:24; see Robinson, "Kerygma and History in the New Testament," 35-36; 43-44.

³⁴⁵ Thiselton ("Realized Eschatology at Corinth," 511) admits the weakness of the eschatological interpretation of 4:8, although he argues for it on the basis of other problems addressed in 1 Cor 5-15. Scholars who reject the eschatological interpretation include Berger, "Die impliziten Gegner," 387-88; Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, 79 note 34; Doughty, "The Presence and Future of Salvation in Corinth," 89-90; Karl Prümmer, "Zur neutestamentlichen Gnosis-Problematik: Gnostischer Hintergrund und Lehreintrag in den beiden Eingangskapiteln von 1 Kor?", *ZKT* 87 (1965), 415-16.

³⁴⁶ A close parallel is Phil 3:12, where Paul denies that he has yet reached moral and spiritual perfection. Here, too, the issue is not eschatological belief but rather spiritual self-satisfaction.

soon and so easily you are filled. . .!’’ The words χωρὶς ἡμῶν do not mean that they think they have already experienced the eschaton which Paul still awaits, but rather that they think they have advanced to maturity on a faster track than Paul. Paul is sarcastically accusing them of thinking that they have advanced spiritually and ethically beyond their teacher.

Such an ethical interpretation of 4:8 fits best with vv. 9-13, where it is precisely the long hard road to Christian maturity which Paul holds up as the model. He counters their view with ethics, not with eschatology. These hardships are what the Corinthians have skipped in their rush to an advanced state of perfection.³⁴⁷ In my view 4:8 should also be understood in the light of 3:1-4. There is a more direct statement of the kind of immaturity which Paul sees in them, in spite of their own high estimation of their spiritual advancement. They may think that they are perfect already, but Paul says “not yet” (οὐπω in 3:2). This conflict between Paul’s evaluation and their own is the source of the irony in 4:8.

It has long been recognized that the language of being filled, rich, and kings resonates with Stoic/Cynic claims about the status of the wise person.³⁴⁸ What is not frequently stressed, however, is that this background serves to support an ethical interpretation of 4:8 rather than the eschatological. The philosophical σοφός is rich and a king because he has achieved the intellectual and moral ideal. There is, of course, no consciousness of blessings of the eschaton involved. Such a way of

³⁴⁷ Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 84.

³⁴⁸ Lightfoot, *Notes on Epistles*, 200; Allo, *Première épître aux Corinthiens*, 74; Wedderburn, “The Problem of the Denial of the Resurrection,” 233-34; Fitzgerald, “Cracks in an Earthen Vessel,” 264. For the wise person as rich: Plato *Phaedrus* 279C; texts in von Arnim, *SVF*, vol. 3, #593, 594, 597, 598, 599, 618; Cicero *De Finibus* 3.22.75; 4.3.7; 4.27.74; *Paradoxa Stoicorum* 42-52; *Pro Murena* 61; Seneca *De Beneficiis* 7.10.6; Horace *Satires* 1.3.124-25; *Epistles* 1.1.106-108; Plutarch *De Tranq. Animi* 472A; *Against the Stoics on Common Conceptions* 1060B; *How to tell a Flatterer* 58E; *The Stoics and the Poets* 1058B-D; Maximus of Tyre 36.5e (Hobein, p. 422); Lucian *Hermotimus* 16 and 81; *Dead Come to Life* 35; *Philosophies for Sale* 20; Philo *Sobr.* 56-57; *Omn. Prob. Lib.* 8 (of the Essenes). For the wise person as a king: texts in Von Arnim, *SVF*, vol. 3, #599, 618, 619; Cicero *De Finibus* 3.22.75; 4.3.7; 4.27.74; *Pro Murena* 61; Seneca *De Beneficiis* 7.10.6; *Epistles* 108.13; Horace *Satires* 1.3.133; *Epistles* 1.1.106-108; Epictetus *Diss.* 3.22.48, 63, 79, 95; Plutarch *De Tranq. Animi* 472A; *De Virtute et vito* 101D; *How to Tell a Flatterer* 58E; *Against the Stoics on Common Conceptions* 1060B; Diogenes Laertius 7.122; Maximus of Tyre 36.5cd (Hobein, pp. 421-22); Lucian *Hermotimus* 16 and 81; *Philosophies for Sale* 20; Philo *Post. Cain* 128; *Migr. Abr.* 197; *Mut. Nom.* 152; *Som.* 2.244; *Abr.* 261. See also Seneca *Epist. Morales* 109.1 and 15, where it is said that the wise person has attained perfection and freedom. Also see above under 1 Cor 3:21 for similar texts which speak of the wise person possessing everything.

thinking was widespread in the hellenistic world,³⁴⁹ and we need not posit any one particular intellectual milieu as the context for the Corinthian consciousness of perfection. In his recent work Peter Marshall has collected impressive evidence for seeing the Corinthians under the influence of a broad Greek tradition which stressed status, excess, superiority, arrogance, freedom, and wisdom, with the related social conduct of arrogance and indifference.³⁵⁰ To think that the Corinthians would have heard Paul's words in 4:8 as a critique of their eschatological eagerness is to stretch for an uncommon explanation when a common one is close at hand.³⁵¹

Nothing in 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 would have prepared Paul's readers to understand 4:8 in an eschatological sense. In this section Paul never opposes a future eschatology to the Corinthian spiritual pretensions. Even where Paul speaks of "this age," the opposite is not the age to come, but rather the power and wisdom of God (1:20; 2:6-7; 3:18-19; compare 2:5). Where Paul does refer to future judgment in 3:5-17 and 4:1-5 he is not opposing their alleged realized eschatology but rather providing a positive ethical motivation. Further, Paul can use the language of 4:8 in a non-ironic way to refer to the blessings of Christ which the Christian possesses now.³⁵² Paul does not see being rich, full, and kingly as qualities reserved only for the apocalyptic future. To read 4:8 in an eschatological sense is to wrench it out of its context and interpret it in the light of a tenuous view of 1 Cor 15, of the deutero-Pauline letters, and of later Gnostic ideas.

The second half of v. 8 simply turns the screw a little tighter in Paul's sarcastic critique. Do they act as if they are so quickly and easily

³⁴⁹ See Wis 6:20; 7:8, 11; 8:5, 10, 14, 18; *m. Abot* 4:1 (on this see Henry A. Fischel, *Rabbinic Literature and Greco-Roman Philosophy: A Study of Epicurea and Rhetorica in Early Midrashic Writings* [SPB 21; Leiden: Brill, 1973], 70-73 and 147-51) and 6:1; *Gos. Thom.* 2, 3, 29, 81; *Thom. Cont.* 145:10-15. On this consciousness among Gnostics see Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 87-88; Pagels, *The Gnostic Paul*, 63. There is some reflection of this language in the Jesus sayings tradition (see Matt 5:6; 6:33; 19:28; Mark 10:21; Luke 6:21, 24-26, 38; 18:30). For further information see Wedderburn, "The Problem of the Denial of the Resurrection," 235; C. M. Tuckett, "1 Corinthians and Q," *JBL* 102 (1983), 607-12; Ernst Haenchen, *Die Botschaft des Thomas-evangeliums* (Theologische Bibliothek Töpelmann 6; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1961), 70-71.

³⁵⁰ Marshall, "Hybrists Not Gnostics," 281 and 286-87; *Enmity in Corinth*, 182-94. See also Fitzgerald, "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," 247-52 and 264.

³⁵¹ Marshall, "Hybrists Not Gnostics," 276. A good parallel to 1 Cor 4:8 is the description of the arrogant person in Philo *Virt.* 173-74; see Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 206-209.

³⁵² Especially 1 Cor 1:5 and 2 Cor 8:9 (πλουτεῖν; on which see also James 2:5; Rev 3:17 uses it in a pattern similar to 1 Cor 4:8, but in a literal economic sense) and Rom 5:17 (βασιλεύειν). 2 Tim 2:12; Rev 3:21; 5:10, 17; 20:4, 6; 22:5 do use this latter verb to refer to an eschatological promise.

advanced to a status of perfection in the church? Then why not let Paul in on their secret?

A Further Positive Model - 1 Cor 4:9-13

With the phrase *χωρὶς ἡμῶν* in v. 8 Paul signals a distance between the Corinthian approach to the Christian life and his own. Verses 9-13 elaborate on that distance, with the object both of giving an ironic critique of their way of thinking and of setting forth a positive model for them to imitate.³⁵³ By "us apostles" Paul probably refers to a wider group than just himself and Apollos.³⁵⁴ This way of life is not a product of Paul's own idiosyncracies.

God has chosen his servants to be a spectacle which the world with its angelic and human powers (v. 9) judges to be foolish, weak, and dishonorable. On the other hand, the Corinthian way is to appear like affluent and sated kings—wise, strong, and honored (v. 10). To the surrounding world the physical poverty of the apostles (vv. 11-12a) seems vile (v. 13) compared to the spiritual wealth of the Corinthians. Underlying Paul's words in vv. 9-13 is a theme which runs like a thread through Paul's argument in 1:10-4:21: all depends on whom one looks to for judgment—God or the world. God's perspective reverses the appearance of things. This is what Paul so urgently wants the Corinthians to see in his apostolic ways.

1 Corinthians 4:14-21 - The Conclusion of Paul's Argument

After the harsh irony of 4:6-13 Paul concludes his first major section of 1 Corinthians in a milder tone. Paul leaves no doubt that he has been holding up himself as a model, as indicated by the explicit exhortation in v. 16 and the reminder of his "ways" in v. 17. We see Paul as a model not only in 4:9-13 but also in 2:1-5, 3:5-15, 4:1-5, and 4:6.³⁵⁵ Accordingly, "ways" refers not just to Paul's actions but also to his

³⁵³ This is the conclusion of the excellent detailed analysis of 4:9-13 by Fitzgerald, "Cracks in an Earthen Vessel," especially pp. 229, 241ff. See also Plank, "Paul and the Irony of Affliction."

³⁵⁴ Cranfield, "Changes of Person and Number," 286.

³⁵⁵ Boykin Sanders, "Imitating Paul: 1 Cor 4:16," *HTR* 74 (1981), 354. The dissertation by Raymond A. Humphries ("Paul's Rhetoric of Argumentation in 1 Corinthians 1-4" [Ph.D. Dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, 1979]) argues that the rhetorical structure of 1 Cor 1-4 revolves around Paul's strategy of presenting himself as a paradigmatic figure, in order to solve the problem of disunity.

theology, as that theology is translated into his ways of thinking.³⁵⁶ So, for example, in 3:5-4:5 they are to think about their unity and diversity in the body of Christ in the light of God's future judgment. The prime example of this kind of thinking is Paul's own regard for his relationship to his "rival" Apollos.³⁵⁷

It should be noted that eschatology plays no part in this conclusion of Paul's argument. The final contrast left to his readers is between "speech" and "power" (vv. 19-20). Verse 20 is a typical Pauline contrast, although "kingdom" is relatively rare in Paul. When he does use "kingdom," most often it refers to the eschatological future (1 Cor 6:9-10; 15:24, 50; Gal 5:21; probably 2 Thess 1:5). The context in 1 Cor 4:20, however, demands an interpretation of the kingdom as a present reality, for power is a present quality of life in Christ (see also Rom 14:17; perhaps 1 Thess 2:12).³⁵⁸ The issue clearly is not the time of the kingdom but rather the mode of its presence. Is the kingdom present in eloquent speech or in the power of a life lived under the cross of Christ? Paul has already made the answer clear in 1:17-18, 24; 2:1, 4-5, 13. Their supposed rule in the kingdom (4:8) is a sham, not because they have appropriated God's future, but because they have thought to demonstrate God's power in their own wise speech rather than in the life of weakness and foolishness under the cross.

3. Summary and Conclusions

The centerpiece in the rhetorical structure of 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 is 3:5-4:5, for here Paul deals explicitly and at length with the problem of social disunity in the Corinthian church. In 1:18-2:16 Paul prepares the ground for his admonitions by a fundamental exploration of the attitudes about wisdom which he sees to lie behind the social tensions. Not until the rhetorical high point in 3:18-23 does Paul openly state how the individual attitudes lead to the social dissensions.

The second and final rhetorical high point of 3:5-4:5 is found in 4:5, and it is the key to understanding Paul's strategy in the use of future judgment language. The direct admonition, "do not judge before the time," is grounded in the anticipation of God's final judgment. What is also important is the way in which this judgment is described, with

³⁵⁶ Hans Dieter Betz, *Nachfolge und Nachahmung Jesu Christi im Neuen Testament* (BHT 37; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1967), 154-57.

³⁵⁷ Sanders, "Imitating Paul," 361.

³⁵⁸ Robertson/Plummer, *First Corinthians*, 92; Allo, *Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 80.

an emphasis on the final revealing of each Christian's thoughts and motives and the awarding of appropriate praise.

Paul's admonition not to judge is warranted by his appeal to the higher court of God's judgment. The contrast is not only, or even primarily, between present and future judgment. It is more a matter of who does the judgment: Christians are ultimately accountable to God, not to one another, for their work is assigned and empowered by God. This also means a contrast in the standard of judgment: the wisdom which the world approves is not the wisdom that God chooses. God's judgment of human wisdom is the primary thematic link that holds together Paul's thoughts on wisdom in 1:18-2:16 and 3:18-23 and on future judgment in 3:5-17 and 4:1-5.

Paul's unusual stress on the revealing aspect of God's judgment gives us some hints about the nature of the Corinthian judging which Paul is concerned about. Paul gives a number of clues throughout 1:10-4:21 that at the basis of the Corinthian social tensions is a pervasive attitude that seeks status on the basis of the attainment of spiritual wisdom. This involves not only the informal evaluation and comparison of teachers, with groups forming around favorites, but also a more general spiritual competitiveness. To Paul it seems that this amounts to an attempt to discover each other's thoughts and motives, to determine in advance the quality of a person's work in the church, and to judge one another's spiritual status accordingly. Paul uses his descriptions of God's future judgment to articulate for the Corinthians the arrogance and impossibility of such judgments in the church, since only God has the right and the ability to test the works and evaluate the thoughts of his servants. The Corinthians are investigating, judging, and bestowing more or less praise on one another. Paul wants them to see that it is more appropriate for them to wait for God to investigate, judge, and praise.

Paul uses future judgment language to affirm to his readers that there is a legitimate human individual diversity within the unity of Christ's church but that this individuality must be used to foster unity rather than to gain or demean people's status. It is precisely the individuality of believers which God will uncover, recognize, and reward with appropriate praise at the final judgment. A Christian now can be content to sublimate the desire for individual recognition and superior status in the church, in light of the belief that he or she will receive just and individually adequate compensation before God.

This emphasis on individual judgment, influenced by the rhetorical situation in 1 Corinthians, means that Paul is using judgment language within a different framework than the more common appeal to God's judgment as the decision between corporate salvation and condemnation. Paul in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 assumes that he is dealing within the realm

of salvation (3:15 and 4:4). The judgment determines only the individual reward and praise.

The only place in 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 where Paul appeals to judgment as the threat of condemnation is in 3:16-17. This is somewhat off the main track of his argument, but it affirms that there are limits to the diversity which the church can support and still survive. Yet even here Paul implies that what constitutes such destructive work is not necessarily clear at the present time. The judgment of such destroyers of the church is a matter for God alone.

Paul chooses to invite his readers to join him in thinking about the individual and the community in the light of God's judgment. In 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 Paul exhibits his own way of thinking about his relationship to a potential "rival," Apollos, and to those in the congregation in Corinth who would judge his status. The purpose in this is not, however, to make any special claims about himself or Apollos, but rather to get the Corinthians to think in the same way about their relationships to their leaders and to one another.

Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5, to put it more broadly, is to use the symbolic language of future judgment in order to resolve the tension in Corinth between the desire for individual status in the church and the need to sublimate that desire for the sake of the unity of the church. Paul wants to create a new way of thinking in his readers, a way of thinking which will enable individuals to do what is necessary in order to contribute to the health of the community as a whole. Paul uses judgment language not as a threat but as a positive motivation for his parenthesis.

There is no evidence in 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 that Paul sees a mistaken over-realized eschatology or rejection of future judgment at the basis of the Corinthian problems. Even 4:8 is best understood to be speaking of ethical overconfidence rather than eschatological prolepsis. Paul is not trying to get the Corinthians to accept belief in future judgment. Rather, he is setting forth to them a new way to use their belief in God's coming judgment. Judgment does not merely serve to separate the Christian saved from the world's condemned. It also serves to encourage individual believers to work faithfully in their various capacities in the Lord's service, secure in the knowledge that their labor will not be without its rewards.

CHAPTER FIVE

JUDGMENT AND ESCHATOLOGY IN 1 CORINTHIANS 3:5-4:5: A PARENETIC ADAPTATION OF AN APOCALYPTIC TRADITION

In order to gain a broader perspective on the function of Paul's eschatological rhetoric in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 it is necessary to compare his judgment language here with such language in other texts. This chapter begins by attempting to locate Paul's judgment language in 1 Cor 3-4 within a functional typology of future judgment in Paul's letters and other early Christian writings. Then these results will be set against the functional map which I drew in Chapters Two and Three of Jewish and Greco-Roman judgment traditions. Finally, I will use these findings to draw some conclusions about Paul's use of judgment language in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5.

1. Survey of the Functions of Future Judgment Language in the Letters of Paul

Paul's references to God's future judgment can be divided into two major functional categories. The most frequent purpose for which Paul makes reference to God's future judgment is to bolster his readers' confidence in their ultimate salvation as members of the Body of Christ. This is a fairly standard component in Paul's thanksgiving periods and in other contexts where he praises or prays for his churches.¹ In most of these passages the emphasis is on the future moment of salvation, with the act of judgment itself only implied. Some texts use the cultic language of purity or blamelessness to express the confidence which the believers can have at the final day (1 Cor 1:7-8; Phil 1:10; 1 Thess 3:13; 5:23-24).² Twice Paul assures his readers that they will be the occasion for his boasting at the last judgment (2 Cor 1:13-14; 1 Thess 2:19; see also 2 Cor 4:14). In Phil 1:6 Paul gives assurance that at the day of Jesus Christ the work begun will be found to be complete. In other texts the threat of condemnation is mentioned only as a foil for

¹ On these passages see Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus*, 16-30.

² See also Eph 1:4; 4:30; 5:27; Col 1:22.

the promise that Christ will bring the believers safely through the judgment (2 Cor 1:9-10; 1 Thess 1:10; Rom 16:20³; 2 Cor 2:15-16; Gal 1:4⁴).

In his elaborate argument concerning the status of Jews and Gentiles in the community of Christ in Romans 1-11 Paul makes rich use of future judgment language.⁵ The key idea is the impartiality of God's judgment (2:6-8, 11-12, 16, 27-29)⁶, which places Jew and Gentile alike under the threat of condemnation (1:18, 27, 32; 2:1-3, 5-6; 3:5-6; 5:16, 18; see also 9:22). This in turn makes both Jew and Gentile equally dependent on Christ for future salvation (5:9-10, 16, 18; 6:21-23; 8:1, 33-34; 11:25-32; see Gal 5:5-6). So the ultimate point of all the judgment talk is once again the confidence with which believers in Christ can stand before God.

Implicit in such confidence in their final destiny is the knowledge that Christians as a corporate entity are distinct from the unbelieving world, which is destined for a judgment of destruction.⁷ This thought is the primary function of much Pauline judgment language (1 Cor 5:13; 6:2-3; 9:24-25; 11:32; Phil 3:20-21⁸; 1 Thess 5:2-5; 5:9).⁹ Even when judgment language is found in connection with a vice list this social function is still dominant (1 Cor 6:9-11; Gal 5:19-21; see Eph 5:5-6; Col 3:6). Even in Phil 1:28, where Paul announces God's judgment on outsiders who oppose the Gospel, the object is primarily to underscore the distinctiveness of the Christian destiny. This same theme is given a much fuller treatment in 2 Thess 1:5-10 (which I take as possibly Pauline), where comfort and encouragement of believers is the purpose.¹⁰

We can conclude that Paul makes frequent reference to future judg-

³ On this unique expression as a Pauline reference to the final consummation see Cranfield, *Romans*, vol. 2, 803; and Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 25; see also Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypitik*, 215-16. I find Synofzik's (p. 25) idea that 1 Cor 10:13 and Phil 4:19 are similar assurances of eschatological salvation less persuasive.

⁴ Although the future time is not emphasized in these latter two texts.

⁵ On this see Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 78-85, 97-104.

⁶ See also Rom 11:11 and 22. On impartiality see Bassler, *Divine Impartiality*, *passim*. Also Reumann, "Righteousness" in the New Testament, 69-72.

⁷ The typology of Synofzik breaks down at this point, for he assigns a parenetic function to many judgment passages without clearly recognizing that many of them use a general parenetic tone in order to underscore a distinctive Christian social solidarity.

⁸ See the comments of Wayne A. Meeks ("Since then you Would Need to Go Out of the World": Group Boundaries in Pauline Christianity," *Critical History and Biblical Faith: New Testament Perspectives* [ed. Thomas J. T. Ryan; Villanova: The College Theology Society/Horizons, 1979], 9) on this passage. The function is "to reinforce attitudes of loyalty and confidence within the Christian groups."

⁹ See also 2 Thess 2:12; Eph 2:3.

¹⁰ This is the conclusion of Roger Aus, "Comfort in Judgment: The Use of Day of the Lord and Theophany Traditions in Second Thessalonians 1" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale 1971), esp. 111.

ment in order to encourage corporate confidence in a distinctive Christian identity based on a separate destiny. Most of these texts are found in contexts where Paul is reminding his readers of what they already know and believe, such as thanksgiving periods. Other texts, such as Romans 1-11, clearly use belief in future judgment as a premise of the argument, again implying that the readers share this belief. A few such judgment references even seem to draw on pre-Pauline church tradition (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Phil 3:20).¹¹ Such a use of corporate judgment language evidently formed a basic part of Paul's preaching, and he could assume that his readers were familiar with these conceptions and shared his belief in them.

In the second major functional category of texts Paul brings judgment language to bear on specific situations or particular individuals or groups within the Christian community. Often in the heat of his polemical battles Paul calls down God's judgment on his opponents or those who disrupt the unity of the church (Rom 3:8; 1 Cor 3:17; 14:38; 16:22; 2 Cor 11:15; Gal 1:8-9; 5:10; Phil 3:19; 1 Thess 2:16).¹² Also to be placed here is 1 Cor 5:5, although in this case Paul expresses a hope for the ultimate salvation of this particular individual.

On the other hand, Paul sometimes anticipates his own salvation in God's judgment (2 Cor 1:14; Phil 2:16; 3:14; 1 Thess 2:19).¹³ Although these texts speak of a personal reward for Paul, he is not claiming anything that is unique or beyond what can be attained by all Christians who carry out their ministry faithfully. In a few related texts Paul considers the alternative if he does not carry out his responsibilities to the Lord (1 Cor 9:27; Gal 2:2; 4:11; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 3:5), but even in these it is doubtful that Paul has in view being excluded from the realm of salvation.¹⁴ In other words, Paul in all these texts sees judgment only in its aspect of the salvation and appropriate rewarding of individual believers.

In other places Paul brings God's future judgment to bear on individual Christians in order to provide motivation for moral exhortation. In both 2 Cor 9:6 and Gal 6:7-9 he draws a connection between present sowing and future reaping at God's judgment, in the former to make a point about generous financial support for the collection, in the latter to make a more general point about living in the Spirit without growing weary. In 1 Thess 4:6 Paul proclaims God's vengeance on specific

¹¹ Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 92-97.

¹² On this group of texts see Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 31-38. See also 2 Tim 1:18; 4:14.

¹³ See also 1 Cor 9:25 and 2 Tim 4:8.

¹⁴ Volf, *Paul and Perseverance*, 261-71.

immoral behavior.¹⁵ In 2 Cor 5:10 Paul calls upon individual judgment of all Christians before Christ to back up his encouragement to strive to please the Lord.¹⁶ The striking fact is that the employment of judgment language in contexts of general or specific moral exhortation is quite infrequent in Paul. Even less frequent is a genuine threat of the loss of salvation to Christian readers. For the most part Paul does not seek to motivate his readers by threatening them with the damning judgment of God.

Other passages, among which are 1 Cor 3:8-15 and 4:1-5, use judgment to shed light on the dynamics between the individual and the Christian community (Gal 6:1-5; Rom 14:1-23; 1 Cor 11:29-34).¹⁷ In Rom 14 Paul is dealing with a congregation splintered into groups, but it is clear that he sees the underlying cause to be individual attitudes toward other Christians. There are individual opinions on various issues (vv. 2, 5-6), which have led to judging (vv. 3b-4, 10a, 13) or despising (vv. 1, 3a, 10b). Paul backs up his basic admonition not to judge (v. 13) with the reminder that a Christian is to be judged by his or her own master, the Lord (vv. 4, 10, 12, with the OT quotation in v. 11 providing authority).¹⁸ The implication is that the need of the individual to prove oneself right at the expense of others is to be sublimated in deference to the final judgment of God.¹⁹ The goal is that each Christian provide no cause for stumbling for another but rather contribute to the peace and upbuilding of the community (vv. 13-23). In other words, the pursuit of the full exercise of individual rights must give way to concern for the community. Future judgment helps to resolve this tension between individual expression and group solidarity by promising that every individual will be held accountable and will be properly rewarded, for good or for ill. The structure of this use of judgment language is exactly parallel to 1 Cor 3-4, where it is also a problem of individuals in relationship to the group.²⁰

¹⁵ Even more specific is the use of judgment in the instructions to slaves and masters in Col 3:24-25 and Eph 6:8-9.

¹⁶ Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 74.

¹⁷ Synofzik discusses this group in *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 39-49, although he does not include 1 Cor 11:29-34 here.

¹⁸ See also v. 22. This basic idea is developed in a non-eschatological way in vv. 8-9. On this passage see Meeks, "Judgment and the Brother," 290-300.

¹⁹ Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypitik*, 83-85. Note that the emphasis on "all" in vv. 10-11 reflects the central judgment theme of impartiality from chaps. 1-3; Bassler, *Divine Impartiality*, 162-64.

²⁰ Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 46. Rom 12:19 is similar in that human judgment and vengeance are made illegitimate by the fact that God alone can take vengeance. But the judgment here is not clearly the future final judgment, nor is this a matter of behavior within the Christian community. See Synofzik, 48-49.

Galatians 6:1-5 also fits this same pattern. Two crucial exegetical issues, however, must be faced in order to treat this passage as I wish to understand it. First, is this a rather loosely organized collection of gnomic sayings without any single theme, as Hans Dieter Betz argues in his commentary?²¹ I think that good sense can be made of these verses as a continuous argument, as the connectives at the beginning of vv. 3, 4, and 5 suggest. The second issue is whether v. 5 refers to final judgment or rather is a gnomic statement concerning individual responsibility for the "burdens" of daily living.²² In my opinion the structure of thought in Gal 6:1-5, which parallels so closely the other judgment passages in Rom 14 and 1 Cor 3-4, supports the thesis that v. 5 is the eschatological climax of this little argument. Further, the correspondence between self-evaluation (δοκιμάζέτω in v. 4) and the final judgment is found elsewhere in Paul (1 Cor 11:28-32), and Paul often emphasizes the individual nature of such a judgment (ἐκάστος, v. 5), as in Rom 14:12; 1 Cor 3:8, 13; 4:5; 2 Cor 5:10.

Verses 1-2 are clear: the spiritual community is to exercise concern for the individual who is in danger of returning to the realm of the flesh, in this way bearing one another's burdens of temptation. The crux comes in the transition to v. 3. How is such vain self-inflation related to the situation of spiritual guidance outlined in vv. 1-2? Surely v. 3 is not talking about the nature of the "trespass" which needs to be corrected, for the real focus of vv. 1-2 is on defining the responsibilities of the community. The best understanding of the transition seems to be that such conceit would keep individual members of the community from fulfilling this responsibility for gentle restoration, or at least from fulfilling it in a manner healthy to the community. Such inflated self-importance would make a person unsympathetic to the faults of others, boastful, and judgmental (compare 1 Cor 4:6).²³ Paul is, in fact, in this whole context concerned with such an attitude which sets the individual against the community (5:26).

Such boasting against others (καύχημα, v. 4) is to be avoided by each person paying attention to his or her own relationship with God (vv. 4-5). One ought not to compare oneself to others in the group, but rather look to one's own standing before God, for God's final judgment

²¹ *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 301-302.

²² Again, it is Betz (*Galatians*, 304) who argues most strenuously against an eschatological interpretation. Synofzik (*Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 43-44) accepts the eschatological sense.

²³ Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921), 330. See also the parallels cited by Betz, *Galatians*, 301.

alone is the ultimate determinant of status for the believer.²⁴ Any other criterion is self-deception (v. 3). If this exegesis of Gal 6:1-5 is correct, Paul once again refers to a final judgment of individuals in order to motivate his readers to work for group solidarity. For the sake of the group they are not to give free rein to their natural desire for self-expression and comparison to others. The knowledge of God's final judgment promotes a particular kind of self-understanding that leads to community-enhancing behavior.

I would like to consider here also 1 Cor 11:27-34, although the use of judgment language in this passage is only partly parallel to that in Rom 14, 1 Cor 3-4 and Gal 6:1-5. To be sure, the judgment (κρίμα in vv. 29 and 34) mentioned by Paul is at least partly experienced in the present (v. 30). Yet ultimate condemnation is envisioned as a possible consequence of the misbehavior at the Lord's Supper (v. 32). Again, the issue is how individual attitudes and behavior affect the community as a whole. Paul's basic admonition is to engage in self-examination (vv. 28 and 31), which should lead to a better discernment of the Body of Christ (v. 29). The present discipline of the Lord provides immediate warning and motivation to engage in such reexamination of behavior at the Supper. The ultimate motivation, however, is the knowledge of the final judgment, with the possibility of condemnation along with the world (v. 32). The structure of this argument is similar to Rom 14, 1 Cor 3-4, and Gal 6 in that present self-understanding in the light of future judgment is set forth as the means toward the goal of group solidarity. However, 1 Cor 11 goes beyond the other passages in that it threatens not just loss of reward but rather exclusion from the destiny of believers. Thus the tone in 1 Cor 11 is one of threat, whereas in the other three passages judgment language provides a positive motivation.

To summarize this brief survey of Paul's uses of final judgment language, we can say that, although Paul employs a rich variety of expressions that have a wide range of functions, they can all be divided into two basic categories.²⁵ In the first, judgment is the great divide between salvation and condemnation. Paul understands and expresses this aspect of God's judgment mostly in corporate language, proclaiming simply that those who belong to Christ will be saved. Paul uses such language to affirm the Christian community's separation from the world, to shore up confidence in their way of living and believing, and to encourage continued perseverance in purity and faithfulness. Certainly Paul recog-

²⁴ Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 43-44.

²⁵ These two categories correspond somewhat to the division by Roetzel (*Judgement in the Community*, 175-76) into the theological categories of justification and ecclesiology.

nizes that individuals can fall away and cross the boundary from the realm of the saved to the realm of the condemned world, but the dominant motif in most of this kind of judgment language is confidence. It is clear that in this use of judgment language Paul is in agreement with early Christian tradition and that he assumes his readers accept this belief as a central part of the Gospel which he preached.

In the second category of judgment language Paul focuses on the judgment of the individual Christian.²⁶ In most of these passages Paul is thinking more in terms of reward or loss of reward within the realm of salvation than of a judgment that will determine salvation or condemnation. Paul uses this aspect of judgment to address a variety of concerns, but for the most part it provides a positive motivation for the carrying out of one's ministry within the Christian community. Often Paul speaks of his own motivation in these terms. A few closely related passages use individual judgment to provide a frame of reference for individual commitment to the unity of the group. In this second category of texts Paul draws less on Christian tradition than when he uses judgment language corporately. It is when Paul applies judgment language to specific situations and uses it in a more individualized way that he is on the creative cutting edge of theological rhetoric.

It should not be concluded that Paul conceived of two separate judgments, one to divide the saved from the condemned, the other to apportion rewards to believers. Rather, Paul looks at one final judgment from two aspects, depending on the emphasis of his argument. For this reason these two categories overlap somewhat and should not be described too rigidly. Nevertheless, making this distinction in Paul's use of judgment language can help us to understand those texts, such as 1 Cor 3-4, where individual judgment plays an important role in Paul's argument.

2. 1 Corinthians 3:5-4:5 Within Judgment Traditions in Antiquity

In my survey in Chapter Two of Jewish uses of judgment language I concluded that prior to the first century C.E. in Jewish texts that refer to a belief in future judgment it functions for the most part to define one group over against another in the face of a conflict, crisis, or threat which affects the whole group. The idea of recompense to individuals was mostly confined to a belief in divine retribution in this life. Even

²⁶ Mattern (*Verständnis des Gerichtes*, 139-40 and *passim*) recognizes this category as a distinct use of judgment language by Paul that differs from his use of it in the realm of justification, but her theological focus causes her to draw an unnecessarily rigid distinction between two levels of judgment.

at Qumran, where judgment language is brought to bear on individuals within the community, it is mostly used to define whether the individual is part of the group or not. Only in texts which come from the time of Paul or later is it common to find ideas of a final moral judgment of individual works.

Early Christian preaching adapted this dominant Jewish corporate understanding of future judgment. God's final judgment would be the ultimate vindication of the Christian community before God, marking a clear separation from the world destined for condemnation. This same corporate function of future judgment language continues to be dominant in other early Christian literature after Paul.

The Gospel of Matthew, which makes more frequent and varied reference to judgment language than any other NT writing, speaks of judgment as the division between the "children of the kingdom" and the "children of the evil one" (13:38-43, 49-50; 24:30-31 = Mark 13:27; 25:31-46; see 3:12 = Luke 3:17). For Matthew, judgment addresses the issue of who will enter the kingdom (7:21-23) and who will commit apostasy (5:29-30; 10:28 = Luke 12:5; 10:32-33 = Luke 12:8-9; 16:26-27; 18:8-9 = Mark 9:43-48) or reject Jesus (3:7 = Luke 3:7; 10:15; 11:22-24 = Luke 10:12-15; 12:27 = Luke 11:19; 12:41-42 = Luke 11:31-32; 23:33).²⁷

The use of judgment language is similar in the other synoptic gospels and Acts. In the Fourth Gospel also, judgment, whether present or future, divides between believers and unbelievers (3:17-19, 36; 5:24, 27-29; 12:47-48). In Hebrews likewise, final judgment defines the difference between those who accept salvation and those who oppose God or commit apostasy (2:2-3; 10:26-31).²⁸ The letter of 1 Peter is similar to Paul in using future judgment language to provide confidence in salvation (1:5, 7; 2:12; 4:13; 5:1, 4) as opposed to condemnation (1:17; 4:5-6, 17). In Jude and 2 Peter the emphasis is on perseverance in the right faith (Jude 24; 2 Pet 3:10-12) so as not to be numbered with unbelievers and heretics in the final judgment (Jude 4, 6-7, 15; 2 Pet 2:3-4, 6, 9; 3:7). The whole book of Revelation, of course, is centered on the theme of judgment. Here the note of confidence in salvation (3:5; 22:12) is undergirded by warnings of a universal dividing judgment (2:23; 3:3; 11:18; 14:7; 20:12-13, 15) with a special emphasis on a judgment of vengeance on opponents and a vindication of the faithful (6:10, 17; 14:10, 14-20; 16:5, 19; 17:1; 18:6, 8, 10, 20; 19:2, 20). The same

²⁷ Other uses of judgment language in Matthew promise individual reward (5:12 = Luke 6:23; 6:1, 4-6, 18; 10:41-42); or warn against anger (5:21-22) or idle speech (12:36-37) or judging (7:1-2).

²⁸ In 13:4, on the other hand, judgment is used as a threat to motivate marital faithfulness.

emphasis on corporate identity is evident also in other writings.²⁹ James stands alone among early Christian writings in using judgment language mostly to warn against specific moral faults (2:13; 4:11-12; 5:9, 12).

In Chapter Four above we saw that Paul's future judgment language in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 does not function in this corporate manner to define the Christian community against the world. Rather, in this passage reference to judgment helps Paul to define the role of the individual within the Christian group. In 1 Cor 3-4 Paul is engaged in a process of expanding the horizons of Christian belief in future judgment. He adapts the traditional apocalyptic conceptions to a different kind of rhetorical and social situation, in which the concern is not defining one group over against another group but rather the role of individual expectation within the group.

Paul, however, was not promulgating this shift of function in a vacuum. His use of judgment language in 1 Cor 3-4 is informed by a variety of Jewish and Christian motifs that deal with similar situations of individual conflict or evaluation. Further, his audience would have been familiar with this individualistic function of judgment from their Greco-Roman milieu. Under the pressures of the rhetorical situation in Corinth Paul brought these motifs together in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 to help his readers adapt their traditional belief in God's future judgment to the problems of their church.

We recall that in the OT and Jewish writings of the second temple period there is a continuous tradition of individual recompense language—in the present life. This is a particularly strong motif in the wisdom writings, where individual recompense is seen as the necessary foundation of a morally ordered cosmos. In the broadest sense, this sort of recompense language encourages the individual to secure a harmonious relationship with the community by adhering to common standards of conduct. The same is true when in later Jewish writings such individual recompense is raised to the level of an eschatological judgment (especially in 2 *Baruch*; the *Testament of Abraham*; 2 *Enoch*; and in Tannaitic writings). One particular form that calls for attention is the *lex talionis* or *quid pro quo* form, i.e., the principle of like and equivalent recompense.³⁰ This motif informs the early Christian tradition that threatens God's judgment on those who judge others (Matt 7:1-2; Luke 6:37; Jas 2:13; 4:11-12). It is also represented in the threat of the destruction of individuals who destroy the unity of the church in 1 Cor 3:17. Paul was

²⁹ 1 *Clem.* 11:1-2; 28:1; 2 *Clem.* 3:3; 5:4; 6:7; 7:6; 11:5-6; 15:1, 5; 16:3; 17:5-7; 18:1-2; 20:4; *Ign. Eph.* 11:1; 16:2; *Smyrn.* 6:1; *Trall.* 12:3; *Herm. Sim.* 4:2-5; *Vis.* 4.3.3-5; *Barn.* 4:12; 15:5; 19:10-11; 21:3, 6.

³⁰ For example, *Sir* 28:1; *Pseudo-Phocylides* 11 ("judge. . . judge"); 2 *Enoch* 50:3-5.

formed in a religious environment in which it was assumed that God took care that individuals reaped appropriate rewards or punishment for their behavior.

Even more striking, however, is the consistent focus of Greco-Roman traditions of postmortem judgment on the fate of the individual. Those Greeks who spoke of an afterlife judgment simply extended to that realm their belief in a just individual recompense in this life. The Greeks saw a continuity between an individual's moral relationship to the community—virtue or vice determines praise or blame—and one's place in the afterlife. This can be seen clearly, for example, on epitaphs which use reference to the postmortem fate of the deceased as a technique of eulogy. In this environment Paul's readers would have found his references to individual postmortem reward, loss, or praise quite familiar. We can surmise that his Gentile readers, in fact, would have found such an individualizing use of judgment language more easily comprehensible than the Judeo-Christian corporate use of apocalyptic judgment.

There are three particular traditional motifs which inform Paul's language in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5, each closely related to conceptions of individual recompense. The first is the appeal to the higher court of God's judgment. Such appeals are found frequently in the OT and later Jewish writings, although never in connection with an eschatological judgment. In most cases, the appeal is made for God to adjudicate a conflict which cannot or should not be settled by the parties involved, or an accused party appeals to God to recognize his or her innocence. In some cases the appeal to wait upon God's arbitration clearly serves to keep the parties from settling matters in their own violent way³¹ or taking vengeance into their own hands.³² In personal laments in the Psalms and in Jeremiah the petitioner looks to God alone for vindication.³³ An important point to note is that such appeals often invoke the omniscience of God as the ground for confidence (e.g. Jer 11:20; Deut 15:9).

Paul's admonitions in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 draw upon this tradition. His point is that individual conflicts in the community should not be fought to a resolution; rather, the parties should wait upon the higher court of God in the final judgment. Related ideas in other Christian writings can be found in Rom 12:19; Rom 14; 1 Pet 2:23; Jude 9; *Did.* 11:11, and in the injunction not to judge (Matt 7:1-2; Luke 6:37; Jas 4:11-12; also Matt 13:24-30, 47-50).³⁴ All these other Jewish and Christian texts share

³¹ See especially 1 Kgdms 24:13, 16 [12, 15E]; 25:39; Josephus *Antiquities* 7.199.

³² *T. Gad* 6:7; Deut 32:35-36; 1QS 10:17-20; 2 *Enoch* 50:3-5.

³³ For example, Jer 11:20; 17:18; Ps 25:1-2 [26:1-2MT].

³⁴ On this motif see Meeks, "Judgment and the Brother," 294.

the belief that the place of the individual within the community can be solidified by deferring present action to the omniscient, just, and adequate judgment of God. Human judgments by contrast are only ignorant, unjust, and inadequate; therefore, they are unnecessarily destructive.

A second motif which Paul uses to undergird his use of judgment language in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 is that of God's omniscience. To be sure, 1 Cor 3:13 and 4:5 actually speak of the future revealing of works and motives. It is clear, however, that future revealing is just a variation on the theme of omniscience. That divine omniscience certifies the justice of recompense is a common belief in the OT and Jewish texts (including especially appeals to the higher court of God's judgment; see Philo *Spec. Leg.* 3.52). This is true not only because God can see deeds done in secret or in darkness, but more especially because only God can look into the thoughts and motives of the heart (see Philo *Virt.* 171-172). The motif of omniscience or revealing is particularly apropos to individual recompense, where precise knowledge of the person is required to apportion individually appropriate rewards or punishments. Greek texts also commonly connect divine omniscience with recompense in this world or the next. As in Jewish texts, this motif is sometimes expressed in terms of postmortem examination or revealing.³⁵

Early Christianity, too, assumed God's omniscience.³⁶ The invocation of this belief often implies a threat of judgment³⁷ or a reversal of ordinary human self-evaluation (Luke 16:15). Other texts explicitly connect eschatological judgment with divine omniscience or revealing.³⁸ Once again, in all these texts—Jewish, Greco-Roman, Christian—this motif is particularly well-suited to lay stress on the individual aspect of divine judgment. Paul in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 uses this familiar motif for two purposes: to stress the individual differentiation in God's judgment, and to contrast the inadequate human evaluation going on among the Corinthians with the omniscient judgment of God.

The third motif which Paul draws upon in order to lay stress on an individual judgment is the idea of differentiated rewards. As we have seen, this idea, although it is implicit in most references to recompense in this life, is rare in Jewish texts where eschatological judgment is the reference. As one would expect, this idea does come into play occasion-

³⁵ Pseudo-Plato *Axiochus* 371A; Seneca *Hercules Furens* 579-81; Statius *Thebais* 4.530-32; Virgil *Aeneid* 6.431-33; Lucian *Menippus* 11-14; *Downward Journey* 23-27; *Dialogues of the Dead* 376; Zeus *Catechized* 17-18; but compare Seneca *Oedipus* 765-67.

³⁶ For example, Acts 1:24; 15:8-9; 1 John 3:20-31; 2 *Clem.* 9:9; Ign. *Phld.* 7:1; *Herm. Man.* 4.34—all without connection to judgment.

³⁷ Heb 4:12-13; 1 *Clem.* 21:2-3, 9; Ign. *Eph.* 15:3; *Magn.* 3:2; Pol. *Phil.* 4:3.

³⁸ Rev 2:23; see 2:2, 9, 19; 3:1, 8, 15; 1 *Clem.* 28:1; 2 *Clem.* 16:3; *Herm. Sim.* 4.2-4.

ally in later Jewish texts in which individual moral judgment is the focus.³⁹ The idea is much more prevalent in Greco-Roman texts, where great stress is often placed on the honors, praise, rewards, or prizes to be attained in the afterlife in accordance with one's virtue, or on the ingeniously appropriate tortures awaiting the perpetrators of various kinds of vice. Paul is counting on his readers' familiarity with such judgment language when he speaks in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 about the reward and praise to be awarded by God to individual Christians at the judgment.

Other early Christian texts are reluctant to speak of postmortem rewards in terms that imply various levels of reward. Matt 5:19 is the most explicit text that can be found, setting up a continuum from least to greatest in the kingdom of heaven. This is similar to Paul's idea of reward and loss of reward within the realm of salvation in 1 Cor 3:14-15. Only a few other texts allude indirectly to the idea of differentiated eschatological fates.⁴⁰ This relative absence of such language in Judaism and Christianity makes Paul's language in 1 Cor 3-4 stand out all the more strikingly. Here we see clearly the degree to which Paul has adapted judgment traditions in a fresh way to address the problems in Corinth.

3. The Function of Eschatological Judgment Language in 1 Corinthians 3:5-4:5

Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 is formed around the goal of admonishing the Corinthian congregation to unity under the name of Jesus Christ (1:10). The use of apocalyptic judgment language in 3:5-4:5 is one of the means Paul uses to accomplish that larger end. There is no evidence in 1 Cor 1-4 that Paul sees apocalyptic eschatology—or more precisely, the Corinthian lack of it—as an underlying cause of the Corinthian disunity. Rather, Paul locates the core of the problem in their over-zealous striving for the attainment of wisdom and the status which goes with it. He sees that this zeal has led to a situation characterized by boastfulness, arrogance, competitiveness, partisanship, and an eagerness to evaluate the work and wisdom of one another. This social fractiousness threatens to destroy the temple of God which they have become through faith in Jesus Christ. In other words, Paul sees the heart of the issue as ecclesiology, not eschatology.

We can characterize 1 Cor 1-4, therefore, as parenesis, not theologi-

³⁹ Pseudo-Philo *Bib. Ant.* 64:7; 1 *Enoch* 50:1-5; 61:8-9; 2 *Enoch* 44:3-5; m. *Abot* 2:16.

⁴⁰ Matt 5:12=Luke 6:23; Luke 6:35; Mark 12:40=Luke 20:47; Heb 10:35; 2 John 8; 1 *Clem.* 6:2.

cal polemics or self-defense. Parenesis is defined as the act of motivating hearers to engage in actions which they already recognize as moral.⁴¹ Paul is not primarily trying to show the Corinthians that they have wrong beliefs or ethical conceptions. Rather, he is trying to clarify for them how their zeal for one good—wisdom—has begun to threaten an even more fundamental good—the unity of the Body of Christ. Apocalyptic judgment language becomes important in Paul's argument as a way of analyzing this tension and creating a resolution for it.

The tension which Paul identifies can be characterized more precisely. For the Corinthians, their acceptance of Christ in baptism created certain expectations. They were now among those destined for salvation at the final judgment; they had been given wisdom and the gifts of the Spirit. From this they expected to reap certain benefits—personal freedom, status, the enjoyment of their exalted knowledge. Paul does not question the validity of their gifts or their right to these personal expectations. He does, however, point out to them that their quest to fulfill these personal expectations comes into conflict with another corollary of their salvation in Christ—the unity of Christ's people. Paul uses the conception of apocalyptic judgment, among other devices, to shed light on this conflict of expectations. He sets the fractious effect of their present attempts at evaluation and judgment over against the unitary accountability of all Christians to God in the coming judgment.

Social anthropological studies of millenarian movements have noted that vivid future expectations often arise within groups which are experiencing some kind of cognitive dissonance, that is, some kind of clash between expectations and reality or between conflicting expectations.⁴² People may be only vaguely aware of the dissonance or its nature and seriousness. The function of a prophet is to articulate the problem, in fact to heighten the sense of intellectual crisis.⁴³ Once the

⁴¹ Werner Wolbert, *Ethische Argumentation und Paränese in 1 Kor 7* (Moraltheologische Studien, Systematische Abteilung, 8; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1981), 18-19.

⁴² See Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, who on p. 3 defines cognitive dissonance as the existence of nonfitting relations among cognitions and on pp. 6-7 notes that one kind of dissonance is when two or more established beliefs or values are inconsistent. Robert B. Zajonc ("Thinking: Cognitive Organization and Processes," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 15 [ed. David L. Sills; Macmillan Company and the Free Press, 1968], 619-20) notes that dissonance can arise when an individual behaves in ways contrary to his principles.

⁴³ This point is made persuasively about the author of the NT Apocalypse by Adela Yarbro Collins (*Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984], 77 and 141). See especially Burridge, *New Heaven, New Earth*, 155: "[The millenarian prophet] must articulate thoughts and aspirations and emotions that are immanent in the community to which he speaks if he is to be acceptable as a prophet. He externalizes and articulates what it is that others can as yet only feel, strive towards and imagine but cannot put into words or translate explicitly into action."

dissonance and its implications have been made clear, the prophet can overcome the tensions by appealing to future expectations, providing a "resolution in the imagination."⁴⁴ That is, the prophet provides people with a new way of thinking. The dissonance is resolved by seeing how the transcendent future will overcome the present impasse. This new way of thinking then enables individuals to change their behavior accordingly.

In 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 Paul invites his readers to look to the future judgment of God for the fulfillment of their legitimate aspirations for reward, status, and praise. Secure in the expectation that each individual will receive adequate and appropriate recognition at God's final judgment, each member of the community can sublimate those community-destroying desires for fulfillment. Their individual needs for recognition are transformed to a transcendent level, reducing the fractious potential of such individual needs and expectations. Paul asks his readers to wait upon God's judgment for the ultimate sorting out of praise and blame, reward and loss. In any case, present evaluations are limited by ignorance of motives and results. The Corinthians can therefore wait for their evaluation, for the sake of harmony in Christ.

Conceptions of future judgment often are employed in the carrot or stick fashion—to motivate by means of a threat or a promise.⁴⁵ There is certainly an element of threat and even more of promise in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5. Paul, however, is not simply appealing to their fears or enlightened self-interest. This is seen in the rhetorical device Paul uses to introduce his apocalyptic judgment language. He does this in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 by setting forth the way he thinks about himself in relationship to Apollos and the church. We have seen that Paul is not engaging in self-defense or polemics but is actually setting forth a "true model of Christian consciousness."⁴⁶ Paul wants each of his readers to think about his or her relationship to others in the community in the light of the final evaluation and recompense of each before God. He is offering for their consideration an adaptation of their accepted Christian symbolic world view, their "symbolic universe". This works not primarily as threat or promise, but as a new imaginative framework in which to resolve the conflicting expectations which have arisen in their quest to find fulfillment as Christians. Paul offers himself as a model of this way of thinking.

⁴⁴ The phrase is from Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 32

⁴⁵ Meeks, "Social Functions of Apocalyptic Language," 694.

⁴⁶ The phrase is that of Fiore, "Covert Allusion," 86.

This framework for thinking depends on an expectation of future judgment. But the effectiveness of Paul's appeal to the future does not depend totally on a sense of imminence. The appeal to future judgment serves to underscore an even more fundamental belief--that there is a deep divide between God and the creatures God has made. In terms of the specific Corinthian situation the consequence of this belief is that human wisdom and divine wisdom are not the same. What appears wise by human standards is foolish by God's standards. Therefore, the believer looks for evaluation and judgment not to human standards but to divine. The temporal dimension of this gulf between divine and human wisdom is expressed in final judgment language. Thus, the judgment language of 3:5-4:5 complements the overall theological perspective which Paul develops in 1 Cor 1-4.

Recent social anthropological study of millenarian movements has emphasized the social functions of eschatological beliefs.⁴⁷ Apocalyptic language usually serves to strengthen the group. It either encourages radical changes that will set the group apart or discourages changes that would threaten the solidarity of the group. Paul's use of apocalyptic eschatology in 1 Corinthians is no exception. But what needs to be emphasized, especially in the case of 1 Cor 3:5-4:5, is that this group-solidifying function is attained by means of a focus on the intellectual needs of the individuals within the group. What is really at issue in Corinth is what it takes to be a person within the group, that is, how individual integrity is to be defined and attained.⁴⁸ The Corinthians are seeking integrity on the basis of individual attainment of wisdom. Paul tries to get them to think, instead, that a person's integrity depends ultimately on God's judgment. If the Christian thinks in this way, then he or she will act in ways that will lead to greater solidarity within the group. This is so because for Paul the integrity of the whole community depends on God's judgment of salvation. Therefore, a Christian community cannot be a group in which the primary goal is the self-centered gratification of individual needs. Rather, the group which depends on God for integrity is a community in which each person seeks to de-

⁴⁷ Meeks, "Social Functions of Apocalyptic Language," 688-89.

⁴⁸ The focus of millenarian ways of thinking on the problem of individual integrity is the insight of Burridge, *New Heaven, New Earth*, see especially p. 96. He is thinking of conflicts between groups--such as the native population versus the colonial overlords--which cause natives to have a crisis of integrity; but the insight could apply to any situation in which integrity and access to power and prestige is in doubt. Such is the case, I think, within the Corinthian church, although I also think that this was exacerbated by pressures from the values of the culture in the Greco-Roman city.

velop—"build up", in Paul's terms—not only his or her own capabilities but also those of the other members and of the group as a whole.⁴⁹ I am not suggesting that Paul approaches the problem from a psychological point of view, as if his primary concern were individual well-being. Rather, he instinctively sees that his goal of group solidarity cannot happen unless he provides a way for individuals to develop a new way of thinking about their source of integrity. The appeal is cognitive, to the individual's imagination, but not as a narcissistic fantasy escape from the reality of the tensions. Rather, the knowledge that one will find integrity in God's judgment is a source of new energy and commitment to the goals of the community as a whole.

How does Paul's rhetorical adaptation of apocalyptic judgment language in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 relate to the eschatological beliefs previously held by the Corinthians? We can begin to answer this question by making an observation about theological beliefs and how they relate to actual thinking and behavior. Beliefs which are inherited and formally accepted do not necessarily become operative in regulating one's way of thinking and acting.⁵⁰ An accepted religious "belief", if it has no perceived relevance to the life situation, may not generate the power to shape the life of a group.⁵¹

I suggest that this is precisely the situation faced by Paul in Corinth. Those Corinthians who became Christians accepted Paul's preaching of God's future judgment as a confirmation of the destiny and solidarity of the Christian community against the outside world. Yet they found such a conception of little use in dealing with the issues and tensions which actually were of concern in the community. The conception of future judgment was accepted as a basis for their being Christian, but it was not operative in any significant way for resolving questions which their Christian life raised. Their failure was not in theological correctness, but in imaginative application.

Paul attempts to make the conception of eschatological judgment more broadly operative in Corinth by relating it to a live issue—the problem of individual attainments within the community. This is a fundamental teaching strategy: make the abstract concept interesting

⁴⁹ Compare the typology of small groups suggested by Theodore M. Mills (*The Sociology of Small Groups*, [Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1967], 119-120): Narcissistic groups, whose aim is the gratification of self alone; generative groups, which encourage the development of the capabilities of self, other, and the group.

⁵⁰ Interestingly, Ludwig Wittgenstein (*Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology, and Religious Belief* [ed. Cyril Barrett; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978], 53-56) uses precisely the example of Last Judgment to make this point about the difference between religious statements and religious beliefs.

⁵¹ See on this Wilder, "Eschatological Imagery," 243-44.

and functional by relating it imaginatively to live issues. In order to do this with judgment, however, Paul had to adapt the traditional judgment conception itself to the terms of the new situation.

We have seen that the dominant Judeo-Christian function of God's future judgment was to solidify a group's boundaries and communal identity. Paul, accordingly, most often uses judgment language to instill a communal Christian confidence. This sort of judgment language, however, could have little to say to the problem of individual relationships with others within the community. So Paul in 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 shifts ground by adapting judgment language to a more individual mode. "Reward" is not the common reward of salvation for all the community but rather the varying individual wage for work of more-or-less enduring quality. "Fire" is not the agent by which the condemned are destroyed but rather the instrument of testing the individual quality of the work. "Work" is not only the common ministry of all Christians, but also the variegated result of the labors of different individuals. At the end Christians will receive not only the common declaration of righteousness but also various levels of praise.

We can now see why 1 Cor 3:5-4:5 causes problems for attempts at systematic doctrinal analyses of judgment in Paul. Paul's primary teaching on judgment is that God for Christ's sake will judge all Christians to be righteous and grant them salvation, in contrast to the unbelieving world. This is an absolute either/or judgment, and it underscores the corporate identity of the people of God. Yet in 1 Cor 3-4 and in a number of other places Paul looks at judgment in an aspect which is more individual and relative. This dichotomy has long been recognized by some,⁵² but it sometimes is presented as if Paul thinks of two judgments. Paul, however, does not seem to have in his mind such a systematically ordered scheme of the last events. Rather, he thinks of one judgment but looks at it in two different aspects. Which aspect is foremost depends on the needs of the rhetorical situation. Such rhetorical flexibility defeats attempts to discover absolute systematic consistency Paul's conceptions of God's final judgment.

⁵² See Mattern, 139-40; Quinn, "The Scriptures of Merit," 87. Cosgrove ("Justification in Paul," 660 and 670) makes some interesting observations on judgment language which are largely compatible with my analysis.

APPENDIX

A SKETCH OF PAUL'S ESCHATOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 5-16

This study has argued that, as far as can be seen from 1 Cor 1:10-4:21, a rejection of a future dimension of the Christian life is not the root of the Corinthian problems as Paul sees them. The apocalyptic eschatology used by Paul is not a polemical correction of their mistaken realized eschatology. It is rather an attempt to provide a positive intellectual framework in which can be resolved certain tensions in values and attitudes characteristic of the Corinthian appropriation of Christianity. In this appendix I sketch how this thesis might hold true for other eschatological texts in the letter.

1. 1 Corinthians 1:7-8

It is sometimes claimed that Paul in the thanksgiving period of 1 Corinthians (1:4-9) not only introduces some major themes of the letter but also already begins to correct a mistaken Corinthian understanding of eschatology, by means of references to the future parousia and judgment.¹ But the eschatological motifs in vv. 7-8 are presented in a positive way and give the reader no reason to perceive in them an implicit criticism.

In v. 7 the participial phrase ἀπεκδεχομένους τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ expresses neither a condition for faithful possession of spiritual gifts nor a warning against arrogant use of them. Rather, it simply expresses the future complement of their present blessings.² The full richness which they have experienced in the "testimony to Christ" is characterized both by possession of gifts and by longing for the final revelation of Christ. Verse 8 spells out the reason why this waiting is cause for thanksgiving: those who are in Christ will appear blameless before God in the final judgment. Though it is clear that

¹ Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypik*, 62, 67-68; Balz, *Christus in Korinth*, 21-22; Klaiber, *Rechtfertigung und Gemeinde*, 123; Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn*, 42; Friedrich, "Christus, Einheit und Norm der Christen," 150-52.

² Weiss, *Der Erste Korintherbrief*, 9.

eschatological judgment is the reference, only salvation is in view,³ and the relationship to the present spiritual gifts is a positive one. Both eschatological clauses in vv. 7-8 remind Paul's readers of the positive future dimension of the work of Christ.

This exegetical result is confirmed by the observation that such references to apocalyptic eschatology are common in Pauline thanksgivings.⁴ In these thanksgivings Paul is reminding them of the eschatological beliefs which they already share with Paul. The function of the eschatological language in 1 Cor 1:7-8, therefore, is to shore up their confidence in their identity as a unique community because of their distinctive destiny in the final judgment. Paul is not being ironic, or flattering them, or correcting them. The eschatological language of 1:7-8 is evidence that the Corinthians had accepted, at least formally, Paul's preaching of the final saving judgment of God for those who are in Christ.

2. 1 Corinthians 5:1-6:11

There are four separate references to apocalyptic eschatology in this section of the letter, each of them an appeal to the final judgment. All of them in some way relate to the central theme of this section, which is Paul's concern for the purity of the community over against the profane outside world.⁵

The first reference to future judgment comes in 5:5b. This serves a function which is somewhat peripheral to the main concern of the chapter with the purity of the community, since this speaks of the ultimate fate of the man himself. To "deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh" suggests that the man is to be placed under a curse which most immediately results in expulsion from the community but which is probably regarded as subjecting him to the danger of death.⁶ There

³ Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypik*, 63-65; see similarly Rom 8:33; 2 Cor 1:21-22; Phil 1:6, 10-11; 1 Thess 3:13; 5:23; Col 1:22; Eph 1:4; 5:27.

⁴ Paul Schubert, *Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings* (BZNW 20; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1939), 4-5; Synofzik, *Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen bei Paulus*, 18-19. See 2 Cor 1:10; Phil 1:6, 10; 1 Thess 1:10; 3:13 (and 5:23, also in letter framework); 2 Thess 1:3-12; Col 1:5; Eph 1:4. Only Romans and Philemon have no hint of eschatology in their thanksgiving periods.

⁵ Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 100, 128-129; Zaas, "As I Teach Everywhere," 125.

⁶ Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 130; G. W. H. Lampe, "Church Discipline and the Interpretation of the Epistles to the Corinthians," *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox* (ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, and R. R. Niebuhr; Cambridge: University Press, 1967), 352; Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Function of 'Excommunication' in Paul," *HTR* 73 (1980), 255.

⁷ Käsemann, "Sentences of Holy Law," 72.

is another, secondary, implication of 5:5b, however. This is that, although the congregation has the right and the power to put someone under the curse, it has no power to determine his or her ultimate salvation or condemnation.⁷ In this respect the thought is similar to that of 1 Cor 3:15 and 4:5.

The next reference to apocalyptic judgment comes in 5:13. In vv. 9-13 Paul underscores the demand for community discipline by implying that if they had really understood Paul's previous letter on this subject they would have taken the necessary action.⁸ Paul forestalls a possible misunderstanding by declaring that the community's purity can only be contaminated from within, thereby heightening the community's distinctive quality and the responsibility which that quality necessitates. A subsidiary point is that, whereas the Christian community is ritually separate from the outside world, individual Christians can enjoy the freedom of social contact with the world. These points are demonstrated by Paul's appeal to God's future judgment (i.e., condemnation; see 11:32) of the world (v. 13a). Verses 12-13a play upon the shifting meaning of κρίνεν. In v. 12a, 'For what have I to do with judging outsiders?', Paul denies that Christians need to judge by means of withdrawing from dealings with the world.⁹ Verse 13a provides the rationale: there is no need to judge now; that is for God to do. In v. 12b, 'Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?', Paul reminds them of their real responsibility for the community. Verse 13a again provides support: if you take care of your own community, outsiders will not go without judgment.

Many have noted the apparent contradiction of 5:13a with the immediately following statements in 6:2-3 to the effect that Christians will judge the world. But the reference is different. In 5:12-13 Paul refers to the limited scope of Christian judgment in the present time. In 6:2-3 he is talking about Christian participation in the final judgment by God of the world. Thus Paul can use apocalyptic judgment language in a highly flexible way to enable his readers to see more clearly the main point of his argument: the holiness of the Christian community both demands a unique and intense community self-discipline and also enables a great degree of freedom and openness on a social level toward the world. This style of argument suggests not that Paul is trying to

⁸ Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 128-129.

⁹ With the first person singular Paul is speaking as a typical Christian, not making a contrast between his apostolic responsibilities and their responsibilities. So Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 184; Senft, *La Première Épître aux Corinthiens*, 76.

convince them to accept God's future judgment but rather that Paul is adapting and using their shared belief in future judgment in order to bring motivation and clarity to his views on the community.

In 6:2-3 Paul uses an apocalyptic idea to shame his readers into settling their own legal disputes internally rather than taking them before outsiders. The double use of the οὐκ οἶδατε form again suggests that Paul assumes their acceptance of such apocalyptic views. He is not arguing for apocalyptic eschatology but from it. The question in v. 2, "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?," and the one in v. 3, "Do you not know that we are to judge angels?," are parallel, the second heightening the first. Both are arguments *a maiore ad minus*, the main point being the shameful discrepancy between their exalted status as ultimate judges of the world and their craven running to the world to settle their internal disputes.¹⁰ Though there is a superficial contradiction with 5:13a, 6:2-3 in fact uses judgment to make the same point as that previous verse: the Christian destiny is ultimately separate and higher than that of the world, and therefore the church is responsible for internal self-ordering.

Finally, in 6:9-10 Paul again reminds his Corinthian readers (οὐκ οἶδατε) of the existential consequence of their eschatological beliefs. Although there is a subsidiary function here of moral warning, the main thrust of these verses is to strengthen the Christian conviction in their separation from the outside world. They are "holy ones" (vv. 1 and 11), whereas outsiders are "unrighteous" (vv. 1 and 9). The similarities between the vice list in 5:9-11 and the one in 6:9-10 underscore this point and serve to tie together this whole section under the theme of self-disciplined holy community over against immoral world.¹¹ Paul implies that by going to court before outsiders they are blurring the distinction between themselves and outsiders which is sanctioned by eschatological judgment. Thus vv. 9-10 are parallel to vv. 2-3. Some have claimed that 6:9-10 function as an "eschatological reservation", warning them that the kingdom is a future gift, not a present possession.¹² This, however, is to miss the focus of Paul's concern. Verse 11 makes clear that Paul

¹⁰ On this passage see especially Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 56-58.

¹¹ Zaas, "As I Teach Everywhere," 140. Similar uses of eschatological inheritance language with vice lists in Gal 5:19-21 and Eph 5:5 work primarily not as threats but as reminders of what "is fitting among saints" (Eph 5:3) as opposed to what is normal among outsiders. On these passages see Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 65-68.

¹² Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 129-132.

is trying to affirm their possession of salvation and to draw consequences from that fact for their identity over against the world which is characterized by these vices.

In spite of superficial differences among the four references to eschatological judgment in 5:1-6:11, they all fit into the thematic unity of this section by helping to sanction the ordered purity of the Christian community over against the immoral world. There is no evidence that the Corinthians deny the future dimension, only that they need to be helped to draw the right consequences from that belief. The Corinthians are expressing uncertainty, not over eschatology, but rather over the way to relate community concerns to their existence within the larger world. Paul appeals to their belief in apocalyptic eschatology to help create some order in their uncertainty.

3. 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

This section is transitional, picking up again the topic of *πορνεία* from 5:1-13 but also leading into the discussion of marriage in chapter 7 and the exploration of issues related to Corinthian claims of freedom and knowledge which runs from 6:12-11:1.¹³ Of the numerous thorny issues which this section presents to the interpreter only two call for our attention: what the Corinthian "slogan" of v. 13 has to tell us about Corinthian eschatology, and the function of Paul's reference to the resurrection in v. 14.

The vast majority of commentators take v. 13 a, "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food," as a statement that represents Corinthian thinking.¹⁴ Then v. 13b is taken to be Paul's qualifying response: "God will destroy both one and the other." This view, however, assumes that Paul makes a distinction between the "stomach" and the "body," since vv. 13c-14 speak positively of the body as destined for resurrection, not for destruction. Not only is this alleged distinction unlikely to have been noticed by Paul's readers, but it also is hard to see how v. 13b could then be a qualification or negation of their statement in v. 13a. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor makes a convincing case that in fact the quotation of the Corinthian sentiment continues through v. 13b, ending with *καταργήσεται*.¹⁵ Murphy-O'Connor, however, thinks

¹³ Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 129.

¹⁴ The RSV reflects this "consensus" by placing these words in quotation marks.

¹⁵ "Corinthian Slogans in 1 Cor 6:12-20," CBQ 40 (1978), 394-95. Some other recent scholars are in agreement: Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 146 (although Barrett thinks that Paul accepts their statement without qualification); Wedderburn, "The Problem of the Denial of the Resurrection," 237-38 (he thinks that v. 13b is Paul's own statement but

that Paul completely rejects the Corinthian belief that the stomach, hence also the body, will be destroyed. It seems better to grant that Paul does make some distinction between a crass physical understanding of the resurrection and the resurrection of a glorified body (see 15:35-53, especially 42-44, 50). That is why in 6:14 Paul does not say that God will raise our "bodies," but rather "us."

On this understanding, the function of the reference to the future resurrection in 6:14 is clarified. In opposition to the Corinthian view that the stomach and its lower companion can be given free rein because they are destined to be destroyed (καταργήσεται),¹⁶ Paul argues that bodily behavior is important because the body will in fact be raised (ἐξεγερεῖ).

It is important to note that the fulcrum of Paul's argument in 1 Cor 6:12-20 is not the futurity of Christian fulfillment. Rather, Paul attempts to correct the Corinthian view of the kind of future existence which is in store for the Christian and the proper consequences to be drawn from this belief for present bodily behavior. In fact, the appeal to the resurrection is only one of a number of arguments Paul uses in 6:12-20 to make the same point. The real thread that unites Paul's arguments is that the Christian has a bodily share in the life of Christ. Thus it is clear that eschatology is not the basic issue here. In fact, if the καταργήσεται clause is part of the Corinthian slogan, it would suggest that they do indeed accept a certain kind of apocalyptic eschatology, but one in which the bodily resurrection plays no part.

4. 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

In Paul's discussion of various issues related to marriage in chapter 7, verses 25-38 deal with the topic of παρθένοι, that is, the unmarried (and perhaps engaged).¹⁷ There are two points made by Paul in this section. First, in his opinion it is best for those Christians who are presently unmarried not to marry. Second, since a Christian's status or

that, since it supports the slogan of v. 13a, the Corinthians would have agreed with it); Stanley K. Stowers, "A 'Debate' over Freedom: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20," *Christian Teaching: Studies in Honor of LeMoine G. Lewis* (ed. Everett Ferguson; Abilene, Texas: Abilene Christian University, 1981), 60.

¹⁶ That this denotes apocalyptic destruction, not individual death, is supported by the apocalyptic uses of the verb in 1 Cor 13:8, 10-11; 15:24, 26; see also 1:28; 2:6; 2 Cor 3:7, 11, 13, 14; 2 Thess 2:8.

¹⁷ Vincent Lee Wimbush, *Paul, The Worldly Ascetic: Response to the World and Self-Understanding according to 1 Corinthians 7* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University, 1987), 20; Larry O. Yarbrough, *Not Like the Gentiles: Marriage Rules in the Letters of Paul* (SBLDS 80; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 113.

condition in the world is not determinative of one's standing before God in Christ, it is all right to remain married or even to get married. Within this section Paul uses apocalyptic eschatology in vv. 29-31. The crucial question is, which of the two points does the eschatological outlook support? I argue that in vv. 29-31 Paul is supporting the legitimacy of being (or getting) married, not the preference for celibacy.¹⁸

In order to understand properly the function of the eschatology in vv. 29-31, one must assess accurately the preceding argument in vv. 25-28, particularly the sense of διὰ τὴν ἐνεστώσαν ἀνάγκην in v. 26 and θλίψιν τῇ σαρκὶ in v. 28. These phrases are used by Paul to support his stated preference for abstaining from getting married. Although a majority of interpreters take "the present distress" (v. 26) as a technical term for woes and tribulations preceding the eschaton,¹⁹ this in fact is not a necessary or even likely exegesis. There is no clear evidence that the perfect participle ἐνεστώσαν should be translated "impending."²⁰ Nor is it likely that ἀνάγκην is meant by Paul to refer to pressure on the community that results from an imminent apocalypse.²¹ Rather, τὴν ἐνεστώσαν ἀνάγκην refers to the present pressure on the Christian community that results from its commitment to the Lord. Similarly, θλίψιν τῇ σαρκὶ does not refer to a sign of the eschaton, but to the hardships that are peculiar to marriage (vv. 33 and 34b express a similar thought about marriage), exacerbated by the tension of trying

¹⁸ A number of commentators, it seems to me, have been confused on this point or have gotten it wrong: S. Scott Bartchy, *MALLON CRHSAI: First Century Slavery and the Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:21* (SBLDS 11; Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973), 143-44; Gager, "Functional Diversity," 333; Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 102. Typical is this statement by William Baird (*The Corinthian Church*, 71): "In other words, because of the nearness of the eschaton, marriage should be avoided."

¹⁹ Those who interpret ἀνάγκην in v. 26 and θλίψιν in v. 28 to refer to eschatological signs include Yarbrough, *Not Like the Gentiles*, 103; Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 175-76; Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 132; Holladay, *First Corinthians*, 101-102; Senft, *La Première Épître Aux Corinthiens*, 102; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 196-97; Wolfgang Schrage, "Die Stellung zur Welt bei Paulus, Epiktet und in der Apokalypik: ein Beitrag zu 1 Kor. 7,29-31," *ZTK* 61 (1964), 131.

²⁰ Albrecht Oepke, "ἐνίστημι," *TDNT* 2, 544. In the NT only 2 Tim 3:1 has this sense, and there it is in the future tense. On the other hand, Paul's other uses of the perfect participle clearly have the sense of "present" (Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 3:22; Gal 1:4; see also 2 Thess 2:2 and Heb 9:9). The evidence presented by BAGD, p. 266, for the sense "impending," is mostly unconvincing. Compare these texts which clearly use the verb to speak of present misfortunes: 1 Esdr 9:6; 2 Macc 6:9; 3 Macc 1:16.

²¹ The closest parallels in Paul are 1 Thess 3:7; 2 Cor 6:4; 2 Cor 12:10, where the word refers to pressures that result from the proclamation of the Gospel, not signs of the end. The only obviously apocalyptic use in the NT is in Luke 21:23.

to care for both the spouse and the Lord.²² My point is that neither v. 26 nor v. 28c are to be taken with vv. 29-31. Verses 26 and 28c present a non-eschatological practical argument in favor of the preference for not marrying.

Paul's second point in vv. 25-38, which accords with the main thrust of the whole chapter, is that the Christian's situation in the world is not of ultimate importance before God (see especially vv. 17-24). It follows that those already married are to remain so (v. 27a; also vv. 2, 10, 12-13) and, more to the point of this specific issue, those engaged to be married can marry without sin (vv. 28, 36, 38a). It is to back up this point that Paul turns in vv. 29-31 to apocalyptic eschatology. These verses, however, treat the issue in a theologically generalized way, drawing examples from beyond the institution of marriage.²³ Apocalyptic statements in vv. 29a and 31b frame this little section. "The appointed time has grown very short" is linked with v. 31b, "For the form of this world is passing away." Together these sentences stress the temporary nature of the "world" and the "appointed time" allotted to it in God's plans. Paul by the word *σχῆμα* calls attention to the manifestations of the world which he mentions in vv. 29b-31a--institutions such as marriage, emotions such as weeping and rejoicing, activities such as commercial dealings. The point is that the world's manifestations are transient and thus not worthy of serious commitment.²⁴

The *ὡς μὴ* exhortations are founded on this apocalyptic note of the transitory nature of the things of the world in which people are involved. Paul, of course, is urging the behavioral consequences of such apocalyptic knowledge, although he leaves the specifics unstated.²⁵ Yet, I believe, Paul's primary concern here is to explain the basis on which the Christian can legitimately live in the world. It seems that in Corinth,

²² For Paul, tribulations arise because of the preaching of the Gospel, but there is no clear sense that they are signs of an imminent end of the world. A few interpreters do recognize the non-eschatological character of both *ἐνεστώσων ἀνάγκην* and *θλίψιν*: Wimbush, *Paul, The Worldly Ascetic*, 20, 22; Arthur Lewis Moore, *The Parousia in the New Testament* (NovTSup 13; Leiden: Brill, 1966), 116; Grosheide, *First Corinthians*, 175, 177.

²³ Bartsch, *MALLON CRHSAI*, 152, 166, noting the similarity in scope to vv. 17-24. The best exegetical treatment of vv. 29-31 is found in Wimbush, *Paul, The Worldly Ascetic*, 23-47. I cannot agree with Wimbush, however, that vv. 29-31a are a non-Pauline tradition which Paul quotes (pp. 44-46).

²⁴ Wimbush, *Paul, The Worldly Ascetic*, 47.

²⁵ Wimbush (*ibid.*, 31) suggests that Paul is concerned with the power of entanglements in the world to make one unprepared for the end (see Luke 17:26-29; 21:34-36). But surely Paul is not here viewing the world in such negative terms.

and indeed within Paul himself, there is a tension felt between the Christian ideal of undistracted service to the Lord and day-to-day life within the structures of the world. Some in Corinth are urging that this tension be resolved by asceticism, particularly celibacy. For Paul, however, the tension is built into the Christian life and cannot be so readily escaped. Even if one can avoid marriage, one cannot simply escape all weeping, rejoicing, buying, selling. In short, one cannot stop making use of the world. Paul's answer to this tension, a real case of cognitive dissonance, is that the tension can be endured in the knowledge that the two sides of it are not equal. By looking to God's future one can gain a new perspective on the world. Precisely because it is temporary and subject to God's judgment the Christian can live in it and make use of it freely. This idea is parallel to the thought of 1 Cor 5:12-13a.

Consequently, in vv. 29-31 Paul is not supporting the preference for celibacy, but rather just the opposite. He is using an apocalyptic model of existence in the world to depreciate the structures of the world, in order that the Christian might live freely in those structures.²⁶ The result should be a kind of inner detachment, in some ways similar to the Stoic ideal. The motivation, however, is different. For the Stoic the tension is between the world's undependability and the desire for personal freedom; only the dependability of one's own will can secure this freedom. For Paul the tension is between the demands imposed by Christ and the distractions of the world. Only the sure expectation of the end of the world can secure the Christian's freedom.²⁷

Thus we see in 1 Cor 7:29-31 another creative adaptation by Paul of an apocalyptic motif. One might expect that the reference in vv. 26 and 28 to distress and tribulation would introduce an apocalyptic scenario of catastrophic signs soon to be followed by the end of the world. Such a use of apocalyptic eschatology, however, would mean little in the Corinthian situation within Greco-Roman urban culture and is not what Paul wants to communicate to his readers. He is drawing on apocalyptic eschatology in order to counsel openness to the world outside the group. The crisis Paul articulates and deals with is not of corporate identity but of individual dissonance between the demands of daily life and the demands of the new community. Paul is exploiting the hermeneutical

²⁶ This is the main point of Wimbush (ibid., 70, 96).

²⁷ On the similarities to Stoic inner detachment see Gottfried Hierzenberger, *Weltbewertung bei Paulus nach 1 Kor 7,29-31: Eine exegetisch-kerygmatische Studie* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1967), 42; Herbert Braun, "Die Indifferenz gegenüber der Welt bei Paulus und bei Epiktet," *Gesammelte Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1967), 159-167 (Braun's main texts are 1 Cor 7:29-31 and Epictetus Diss. 3.24); Schrage, "Die Stellung zur Welt," 132-136.

possibilities in the tension between church and culture in order to teach apocalyptic eschatology in a new key.²⁸

5. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

The large issue in 1 Corinthians 8-10 concerns participation by Christians in outside society, particularly the eating of meat offered to idols, and the effects of such participation on the solidarity of the group. Running as a steady stream underneath this issue, however, is Paul's plea for the freedom of individual conscience, which if violated can lead to the loss of personal salvation and thus hinder the success of the Gospel's mission.²⁹ Apocalyptic eschatology plays a minor role in these chapters, being used only in 9:24-27. This little section serves as the climactic conclusion of the whole chapter.³⁰ Chapter 9 fits within chapters 8-10 as Paul's presentation of himself as a model of Christian self-abnegation for the sake of another's conscience and salvation, and thus for the sake of the success of the Gospel and the solidarity of the community.³¹

Verse 24 contains the basic image, that of the athletic contest in which all compete but only one wins the prize. Here already the limitations of this analogy become clear, for Paul cannot be thinking literally of a salvation limited to one. The point is rather the cause-and-effect relationship between the exertion and the prize. The main point comes in v. 25, in the phrase πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται. Paul reminds them that running so as to reach the goal requires more than enthusiasm and desire. It requires a disciplined self-sacrifice. Here Paul goes beyond the terms of the analogy to state openly that the goal he is speaking of is an "imperishable crown." Verses 26-27 follow a similar pattern of thought, only with Paul now speaking of himself in a paradigmatic, typical way.³² Verse 26 repeats the image: neither the runner nor the

²⁸ I am paraphrasing language used to make another point by Frederick W. Danker, "Bridging St. Paul and the Apostolic Fathers: A Study in Reciprocity," *CurTM* 15 (1988), 87.

²⁹ Richard A. Horsley, "Consciousness and Freedom Among the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 8-10," *CBQ* 40 (1978), 574. See especially 8:7, 9-11, 13; 9:12b, 18, 19-23, 27; 10:23, 29, 30, 32, 33.

³⁰ Victor C. Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agon Motif: Traditional Athletic Imagery in the Pauline Literature* (NovTSup 16; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 84-85.

³¹ Thus chap. 9 is an explication of 8:13; see also 2 Thess 3:9. In support of the integrity of chaps. 8-10 and the function of chap. 9 as Paul's model see Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 219 note 84; Horsley, "Consciousness and Freedom," *passim*; Hans von Soden, "Sakrament und Ethik," 6; Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsansagen*, 59; Wendell Willis, "An Apostolic Apologia? The Form and Function of 1 Corinthians 9," *JSNT* 24 (1985), 33-48.

³² The "we" in v. 25 should be taken to refer to all Christians.

boxer train without a clear goal. Verse 27 draws from this the main point: reaching the goal requires a purposeful self-abnegation.³³ The context shows what Paul means by such self-abnegation. What is needed is the willing non-use of rights and freedoms for the sake of the conscience and salvation of the brother or sister in Christ (8:13; 9:12, 15, 18, 19; 10:28). Thus Paul is calling, not for a general asceticism, but for a specific ordering of one's freedoms on the basis of the conscience of the brother or sister.

Whereas Paul makes this same point elsewhere in these chapters on the basis of the missionary goal of such behavior (especially in 9:19-23), in 9:24-27 the emphasis is on acting this way for the sake of one's personal salvation. The missionary goal and the personal goal are not at odds but in fact merge into one. The word ἁδόκιμος carries an implied threat of the loss of salvation, or at least of one's reward. This note is picked up and developed further in 10:1-13. Probably Paul in 9:27 has in mind a higher degree of reward within salvation,³⁴ as in 3:8, 13-15, and 4:5, where the idea of final judgment is individualized.³⁵

Again we see Paul in 1 Cor 9:24-27 using apocalyptic eschatology to address a contradiction in the Corinthians' Christian experience. On the one hand there is their right and desire to express their freedom from "superstitious" constraints. They see Christianity as a way to be all that they can be. On the other hand is the burden of the "weak," whose salvation depends on the strong giving up the exercise of their freedoms. In the rest of chapter 9 Paul simply articulates and pushes this tension. In vv. 24-27, however, by means of an eschatological outlook Paul points out that the personal goal and the corporate goal are really one and the same. He tells them that if they really want to exert themselves and excel above others, then they should look to the eschatological prize, and that requires sublimation of some personal freedoms in the present.

Thus the underlying problem is the tension between self-fulfillment and self-sacrifice which is raised by their experience of Christianity as individuals within a group. Paul addresses this dissonance by taking an image prevalent in Greco-Roman culture and adapting it to teach future eschatology. The "agon" motif, with its associations with Greek ideals of personal attainment,³⁶ is well suited to the rhetorical situation. Paul

³³ This analysis is dependent on Synofzik, *Die Gerichts- und Vergeltungsaussagen*, 60; Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agon Motif*, 85, 87, 92.

³⁴ On this see Volf, *Paul and Perseverance*, 233-47. Other uses of ἁδόκιμος and cognates (2 Cor 13:5-7; 1 Cor 3:13; 1 Thess 2:4; 2 Cor 10:18) show that Paul likes to use this word to express divine approval, but it has no technical apocalyptic sense.

³⁵ See also the close parallel in Phil 3:12-14.

³⁶ Pfitzner, *Paul and the Agon Motif*, 16-17.

can use it to address the Corinthians in terms which are dear to their view of the world and yet provide a twist that can create a new way of looking at their conflicting experiences.

6. 1 Corinthians 11:26-34

Within the discussion of the Lord's Supper in 1 Cor 11:17-34 the first reference to the apocalyptic future comes in v. 26, "until he comes," which is part of Paul's comment on the traditional eucharistic words.³⁷ Some scholars have suggested that this reference to the future parousia is a polemical thrust against a Corinthian sacramental theology that has no room for a future fulfillment.³⁸ Käsemann states that the Lord's Supper for the Corinthians is an earthly anticipation of the banquet of the blessed in heaven.³⁹ The reference to the parousia, however, will not bear the weight of this interpretation. An eschatological dimension is a traditional element in the eucharistic liturgy (Matt 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:16, 18; 1 Cor 16:22),⁴⁰ and similar references to the parousia are common in 1 Corinthians (1:7-8; 4:5; 15:23; 16:22). Paul is simply reminding his readers of what they already know, that the Lord's Supper binds its participants both to Jesus' death and to his future coming. On this common ground, then, Paul can build his specific admonitions in vv. 27-34. In these admonitions the dominant theme is not future expectation as such but rather judgment, both present and future.

It is the Corinthian eating and drinking "in an unworthy manner" which calls forth all the judgment language.⁴¹ The context shows that this unworthiness involves behavior at the meal which contributes to social disunity (vv. 18, 21-22). It is probable that a high sacramentalism allowed the socially superior among the Corinthians to exhibit such behavior without any compunctions.⁴² Yet Paul's treatment focuses on

³⁷ In my judgment the clause in v. 19, "...in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized," does not refer to future judgment but rather to the present dynamics of the church.

³⁸ Conzelmann, *First Corinthians*, 202; Klauck, *Herrenmahl und hellenistischer Kult*, 322-23.

³⁹ Ernst Käsemann, "The Pauline Doctrine of the Lord's Supper," *Essays on New Testament Themes* (SBT 41; London: SCM, 1964), 122.

⁴⁰ Radl, *Ankunft des Herrn*, 110-112; Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 253.

⁴¹ The dominance of legal concepts and phrases in vv. 27-34 is noted by Käsemann, "The Pauline Doctrine of the Lord's Supper," 119-20.

⁴² The parallels between 10:1-13 and 11:17-34 suggest this. The sicknesses and deaths referred to in 11:30 are parallel to the punishments of Israel in the wilderness. It is likely, therefore, that 11:30 is not only a threat. It is also an explanation of how the community could experience these things in spite of its faithful and eager observance of the Lord's Supper. Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 275.

specific behavior, not on theological inadequacies. There is no justification for supposing that the root of the problem is that the Corinthians consider themselves exempt from judgment.⁴³ Paul makes use of two considerations to anchor his admonitions. First is the incontrovertible fact of sickness and death within the Christian community (v. 30). Second is the belief, which Paul assumes that his readers accept, that Christians as a group will escape the apocalyptic condemnation of the world (v. 32).⁴⁴ Apart from this one reference to the future judgment, all the rest of Paul's judgment language refers to the preliminary chastening judgments experienced in the present (ἐνοχος ἔσται, v. 27; κρίμα, v. 29; ἐκρινόμεθα, v. 31; κρινόμενοι and παιδευόμεθα, v. 32).⁴⁵

The activity which is to mediate between the knowledge of judgment and a change in behavior at the Lord's Supper is individual self-examination.⁴⁶ Each person is to "examine" (v. 28) or "judge" (v. 31) himself or herself, which means more specifically "discerning the body" (v. 29). As in Gal 6:4, such self-examination should lead to an individual consciousness of being in a harmonious relationship with the community of the Lord rather than in a competitive or boastful relationship with other individuals.⁴⁷ Here more than any other place in 1 Corinthians we can see how Paul's rhetorical strategy is aimed at changing socially destructive behavior by changing individual ways of thinking.

Paul uses eschatology to set this thinking within a larger understanding of the relationships among individual, church, and world.⁴⁸ On the one side, present chastening judgments of sickness and death forcibly remind the participants in the Supper that it is intended to be a ritual of solidarity where social distinctions must be set aside.⁴⁹ On the other side, the final judgment, when the Lord comes, is the ultimate validation of the communal nature of the meal. Just as in the meal the distinctions of the world are set aside as of no consequence in Christ, so

⁴³ As do Käsemann ("The Pauline Doctrine of the Lord's Supper," 126) and Barrett (*First Corinthians*, 272). See also Roetzel, *Judgement in the Community*, 137 and 142.

⁴⁴ See also 1 Cor 3:15; 5:5; 5:13; 6:9-10.

⁴⁵ Klauck, *Herrenmahl und hellenistischer Kult*, 326.

⁴⁶ Victor Turner, in describing the liminal experience of ritual action, notes that this includes scrutinizing one's values; *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 167.

⁴⁷ Dennis E. Smith, "Social Obligation in the Context of Communal Meals: A Study of the Christian Meal in 1 Corinthians in Comparison with Graeco-Roman Communal Meals" (Th.D. Dissertation, Harvard, 1980), 197.

⁴⁸ Gerd Theissen, "Social Integration and Sacramental Activity: An Analysis of 1 Cor. 11:17-34," *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 164; Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 159.

⁴⁹ Theissen ("Social Integration," 164-65) speaks of the sacrament as a zone under taboo.

in the final judgment the world with its distinctions and structures will be condemned. If individuals insist on bringing their worldly distinctions into the meal, then they are in danger of being found at the last day with the world to be condemned.

7. 1 Corinthians 13

In 1 Corinthians 12-14 Paul takes up the topic of "spiritual gifts," by which he refers to individual abilities to demonstrate special spiritual attainments within the church (12:7-11, 28-30; 14:26). The most prominent of these are "tongues" (12:10, 28, 30; 13:1, 8; 14:2 and *passim*), "prophecy" (12:10, 28, 29; 13:2, 8; 14:1 and *passim*), and "knowledge" (12:8; 13:2, 8; 14:6; these three are mentioned together in 13:8). In a way similar to 1 Cor 1-4, Paul points out that the use of these gifts to measure individual superiority is causing dissensions and disorders within the congregation. Paul counters with a model of thinking which subordinates and harnesses all gifts to the goal of building up the community (12:7, 25; 14:3-5, 12, 17, 31).

Chapter 13 stands apart within chapters 12-14 by the perspective which it brings to bear on the issue. Whereas chapters 12 and 14 look at spiritual gifts from the perspective of the community, chapter 13 looks at them from the perspective of the person who is exercising the gifts. The chapter falls into three sections, in an a-b-a pattern. In vv. 1-3 Paul sets forth the basic contrast between love and exceptional gifts. By the phrases "I am nothing. . . . I gain nothing" it would seem that Paul is intimating that a lack of love will leave one without credit at the judgment.⁵⁰ Verses 4-7 define love in such a way that its prized qualities become obvious. Love is superior because it, unlike the exceptional gifts, directs the person away from self-preoccupation and toward care for the upbuilding of the community.

After this laudatory definition in vv. 4-7 Paul returns in vv. 8-13 to asserting the superiority of love over exceptional gifts, but now from an eschatological perspective. Yet here, too, the dominant idea is the eschatological aspirations of the individual. The opening clause, "Love never ends," forms an *inclusio* with "So faith, hope, love abide (v. 13)." Both clauses include an eschatological dimension,⁵¹ thus intimating that, unlike prophecies, tongues, and knowledge, love is of ultimate value at the judgment. Verses 9-12 explicate the eschatological thesis

⁵⁰ Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 302. See Rom 2:25; Gal 5:2; 6:3; 1 Cor 15:32.

⁵¹ Oda Wischmeyer, *Der höchste Weg: Des 13. Kapitel des 1. Korintherbriefes* (SNT 13; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1981), 154-55.

of v. 8, primarily with reference to the negative side: prophecies, tongues, and knowledge will come to an end.⁵² That is because present knowledge is ἐκ μέρους, partial, imperfect.⁵³ Paul is not speaking in vv. 9-12 about moral improvement or spiritual maturing over the course of time. He is proposing an absolute eschatological contrast between the partial present knowledge and the eschatological perfection (τέλειον). After the analogies in vv. 11-12a verse 12b sums up the whole point directly: although God has broken through the epistemological barrier to know us, our knowledge of God remains incomplete until the eschaton.⁵⁴

It should be noticed that the real function of apocalyptic eschatology in 1 Cor 13 is basically negative—to reveal the limited nature of gifts such as tongues, prophecy, and knowledge. Paul does not really say much about love as an eschatological blessing, except for the relatively vague statements in vv. 8a and 13a. Love disappears altogether from the discussion in vv. 9-12. The eschatological contrast between love and the other gifts is more rhetorical than logical.⁵⁵ In 8:1 Paul contrasts knowledge and love more directly by the criterion of their effects in the Christian community. In 13:9-12 the main point is the futility of glorying in gifts which have such a limited basis and cannot reach their goal. Paul here spots a weakness, a contradiction, in the Corinthian way of using their spiritual gifts. He draws upon apocalyptic eschatology to expose and sharpen that weakness. The weakness is that all their striving to attain and show off these exceptional gifts will ultimately keep them from attaining the vision of God which they are so zealous in pursuing.

Here in chapter 13 is indeed an instance of Paul using apocalyptic eschatology as an "eschatological reservation." It is not necessary to assume, however, that the Corinthians are flaunting their spiritual gifts because they think of themselves as already living entirely in the age of fulfillment.⁵⁶ There is no clear evidence that Paul's concern is their eschatological views.⁵⁷ His more fundamental concern is the upbuilding of the church in unity. Apocalyptic eschatology plays a limited role in chapters 12-14. It enables Paul to point out that a loveless use of spiritual gifts not only creates havoc in the church but also is a short-sighted way to seek the personal goal of perfect knowledge in the presence of God.

⁵² Wischmeyer, *Der höchste Weg*, 124.

⁵³ This phrase binds vv. 9-12 together.

⁵⁴ See also 1 Cor 8:2-3; Gal 4:9.

⁵⁵ For example, one might ask whether in fact our present love is not also imperfect. Also, Paul leaves unclear whether he is thinking of God's love for us or our love for one another. See Barrett, *First Corinthians*, 305.

⁵⁶ This is argued, for example, by Baumgarten, *Paulus und die Apokalypik*, 195-96.

⁵⁷ Arai, "Die Gegner des Paulus im I. Korintherbrief," 436-37.

We see here again Paul's creativity in adapting apocalyptic notions to a rhetorical situation in which the concern is not corporate identity but rather the place of the individual's quest for spiritual fulfillment.

8. 1 Corinthians 15

The denial of the resurrection of the dead by some Corinthians (15:12) has been one of major foundations of the hypothesis that the Corinthian problems stemmed from a "realized eschatology." This view, of course, cannot be demonstrated on the basis of v. 12 itself, which gives no basis for their denial and in fact would seem to refer to a complete denial of the resurrection rather than a temporal displacement. Rather, the hypothesis rests on a reading of Paul's apocalyptic argument in vv. 20-28, where it can be argued that Paul's great concern with the order of events is directed at the Corinthian failure to keep the resurrection as part of the hoped-for future.⁵⁸

As I also indicated above in Chapter One the other common way of viewing the Corinthian denial of the resurrection is that it was based on a popular Greek-influenced anthropology—the Corinthians could not accept a resuscitation of the earthly body.⁵⁹ If this were the root of the problem, then it can be presumed that they had no trouble with accepting a future dimension, as long as it did not involve a bodily future existence. This sort of view would be consistent with a hellenistic-Jewish background of the Corinthian theology, as has been recently and persuasively argued by major studies on 1 Cor 15.⁶⁰ I think that the evidence supports this anthropological view of the problem over the temporal interpretation.

The only other mention of the future resurrection of believers in 1 Cor is found in 6:14. Future eschatology is not the issue in the context of 6:12-20. Rather, Paul is concerned with the destiny of the human

⁵⁸ The basic study arguing for this view is Schniewind, "Die Leugner der Auferstehung in Korinth," 110-39.

⁵⁹ See especially Paul Hoffmann, *Die Toten in Christus: Eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung zur paulinischen Eschatologie* (NTAbh 2; Münster: Aschendorff, 1966), 241-43; Kegel, *Auferstehung Jesu--Auferstehung der Toten*, 42-45; Wedderburn, "The Problem of the Denial of the Resurrection," 239-40; for the history of exegesis see especially Spörlein, *Die Leugnung der Auferstehung*, 1-19; and Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung*, 17-37. Most recently the anthropological view has been affirmed by E. Earle Ellis, "Soma in First Corinthians," *Int* 44 (1990), 141-42.

⁶⁰ Pearson, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology*, 15-17; Horsley, "'How can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?'," 203-231; Sandelin, *Die Auseinandersetzung mit der Weisheit in 1. Korinther 15*, 10 and 151; Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung*, 30. The views of Pearson and Horsley are criticized by Karl Plank, "Resurrection Theology," 42-53.

body and the ethical consequences of that bodily destiny.⁶¹ The anthropological nature of the problem becomes especially clear if we understand v. 13ab (up to and including καταργήσει) to be a Corinthian statement that the body is ethically irrelevant because it is destined for destruction. This reference in chapter 6 is our best guide to the concern over the resurrection in chapter 15; in fact, chapter 15 seems to be a detailed commentary on 6:13-14. In chapter 15, also, Paul is concerned with the ethical consequences of a denial of a bodily resurrection (15:30-34, 58).

Paul's approach to the question of the resurrection is more pastoral and didactic and less polemical than most scholars have maintained.⁶² Specifically, Paul deals in 1 Cor 15 with Corinthian concerns about the death of Christians. That this was a concern in Corinth can be seen from the way Paul refers to such deaths in 11:30. Concern about the death of Christians is also reflected in 15:6, 18, 20, 29, 54-56. The striking similarities between 1 Cor 15 and 1 Thess 4:13-18 also suggest that a similar concern existed in Corinth. In both cases it seems that, although the imminent parousia of Christ was the main motif of early Christian eschatology (as the frequent references to it in 1 Corinthians indicate), the teaching of the resurrection of the dead became more prominent in response to the death of Christians as the years went by.⁶³ But questions were raised in Corinth about the destiny of the earthly body. These questions needed to be addressed if the resurrection was to become a functional part of their thinking and acting.

How Paul proceeds in chapter 15 is seen by comparing the two apocalyptic sections, 15:23-28 and 15:50-57. In vv. 23-28 Paul sets forth a traditional apocalyptic sequence, stated in corporate and cosmic terms, with an emphasis on the cosmic victory of Christ over death and all powers and the final return of all control to God. This is important for Paul's argument, but not because it emphasizes a strict order of events that is yet to be fulfilled. Rather, it is important because in it Paul provides the Christological basis for the resurrection hope. Paul emphasizes that there is a cosmic basis for their personal hope. He gives them assurance of God's final victory and at the same time explains why death is still a power in effect. The reference in v. 23, *ἐκαστος*

⁶¹ Murphy-O'Connor, *1 Corinthians*, 137; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 343-44.

⁶² Hurd, *Origin of 1 Corinthians*, 91-92.

⁶³ Becker, *Auferstehung der Toten im Urchristentum*, 63-64; Gerd Lüdemann, *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles: Studies in Chronology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 212; Spörlein, *Die Leugnung der Auferstehung*, 192; Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus*, 320-22; Becker, *Auferstehung der Toten*, 46 and 54; Hurd, *Origin of 1 Corinthians*, 231-32.

δὲ ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τόγματι, emphasizes more the distinctiveness of the Christological acts than it does the temporal succession, for there is little reason for Paul to make a point of the temporal distinction between the parousia of Christ and the τέλος (vv. 23-24). The stress on the succession of events serves rather to promote certainty, since the events are preordained in God's economy.⁶⁴ In fact, v. 23 implies that the Corinthians accept the parousia, since Paul is using this belief to support the idea of the resurrection.

In 15:50-57 we see that Paul interprets the apocalyptic outline of vv. 23-28 by adapting it to the rhetorical situation at hand. He shifts the corporate and cosmic terms to more personal and anthropological expressions. For example, v. 50 takes a traditional moral judgment form (as seen in 1 Cor 6:9) and restates it in anthropological terms; while vv. 23-28 speak of Christ's victory over death, v. 57 speaks of our victory; whereas in vv. 23-28 the drama is played out on a cosmic scope (vv. 24-25), in vv. 50-57 personal transformation is the focus (v. 51). This is prepared for in vv. 35-49, which treat the question of resurrection in the light of the specific Corinthian questions. It seems probable that Paul treats the questions raised in v. 35 as real questions.⁶⁵ It is inconceivable that Paul would make his real point in vv. 23-28 and then add an anticlimactic philosophical rumination in vv. 35-57. Rather, all of 15:1-34 sets the stage for the central points made in vv. 35-57. The effect is to assure the readers that the apocalyptic preaching of a bodily resurrection is not a crude conception of the mere resuscitation of corpses but a glorious transformation of personal existence that will allow them to participate in an immortal personal destiny beyond death. Contrary to the views of Beker, Paul does not simply impose his alien apocalyptic view on his readers.⁶⁶ Rather, he reinterprets the inherited apocalyptic framework in categories that are more congenial to the cultural assumptions of his readers.

A further observation helps to confirm this interpretation of 1 Cor 15. In Jewish apocalyptic traditions resurrection of the dead and divine judgment are closely associated. The dead are raised in order that they might be judged. Paul, however, never in any of his letters explicitly connects judgment with the resurrection of the dead.⁶⁷ Nor does he ever mention directly a resurrection of unbelievers. In Paul's earlier letters, at least, resurrection is mentioned mostly to address the issue of death and becomes important only when death of Christians is a problem for

⁶⁴ Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus*, 342-43.

⁶⁵ Murphy-O'Connor, *1 Corinthians*, 146-47.

⁶⁶ Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 170-71.

⁶⁷ Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus*, 304-305.

his readers.⁶⁸ In Corinth, as in Thessalonica, the topic would not have come up for discussion at all had it not been for the questions raised by the death of Christians prior to the expected parousia and judgment.

If something like this understanding of 1 Cor 15 holds good, then two conclusions follow. First, the chapter gives no compelling support to the theory that a temporal misunderstanding of Christian eschatology lies at the heart of the Corinthian problems. Second, Paul's way of using apocalyptic eschatology in 1 Cor 15 complements his eschatological arguments in the rest of the letter. Paul is engaged in a process of applying traditional apocalyptic conceptions to new issues that have arisen within the Christian community as it lives in a Greco-Roman cultural milieu. The belief in a resurrection of the dead cannot be a meaningful answer to the problem of the unexpected death of Christians unless a language can be employed which portrays that resurrection in terms that make anthropological sense to Paul's readers.

9. 1 Corinthians 16:22

The final eschatological reference in the letter is the phrase *μαρόνα θά*, which is a citation in Aramaic from the liturgy,⁶⁹ to be translated, "Our Lord, come!"⁷⁰ The function of the phrase is to invoke the Lord as judge as a warrant for the curse *ήτω άνάθεμα*.⁷¹ Paul's ready invocation of this traditional Christian belief serves as evidence that the Corinthian congregation accepted the belief in the future coming of the Lord. This verse at the end of the letter stands with 1:7-8 at the beginning as a reminder to Paul's modern readers that belief in the parousia and judgment was a starting point for Paul's arguments, not the disputed issue.

⁶⁸ In Romans, 2 Corinthians, and Philippians, on the other hand, resurrection becomes a central part of Paul's explication of Christology and salvation (Rom 8:11; 2 Cor 1:9-10; 4:14; Phil 3:11; 3:21).

⁶⁹ J.A.T. Robinson, "Traces of a Liturgical Sequence in 1 Cor. 16,20-24," *JTS* 4 (1953), 38-39.

⁷⁰ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "New Testament KYRIOS and MARANATHA and their Aramaic Background," *To Advance the Gospel: New Testament Studies* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 228.

⁷¹ C.F.D. Moule, "A Reconsideration of the Context of *Maranatha*," *NTS* 6 (1959-60), 307-310.

10. Conclusions

Apocalyptic eschatology, especially the related motifs of the parousia, judgment, and salvation, was an essential part of the formation of Christian identity in Paul's churches, including the congregation in Corinth. The language of this eschatology was largely taken over from Jewish apocalyptic traditions, in which the corporate function was dominant. In cities such as Corinth, however, the fledgling congregations faced conflicts and tensions which the traditional corporate eschatological language could not readily address. Individual Christians faced conflicting expectations relating to life within the Christian group and life as a Christian in the larger culture. In 1 Corinthians we see Paul formulating a new eschatological language as he adapts the traditional corporate images to the new situation. The emphasis on the future dimension of faith in 1 Corinthians is designed to provide for Paul's readers a way to think about and resolve these conflicting expectations. Viewed in this way, Paul's frequent appeals in 1 Corinthians to God's future actions in Christ are seen as part of a positive didactic strategy rather than as a polemical response to a mistaken eschatological theology.

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ISSN 0167-9732

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